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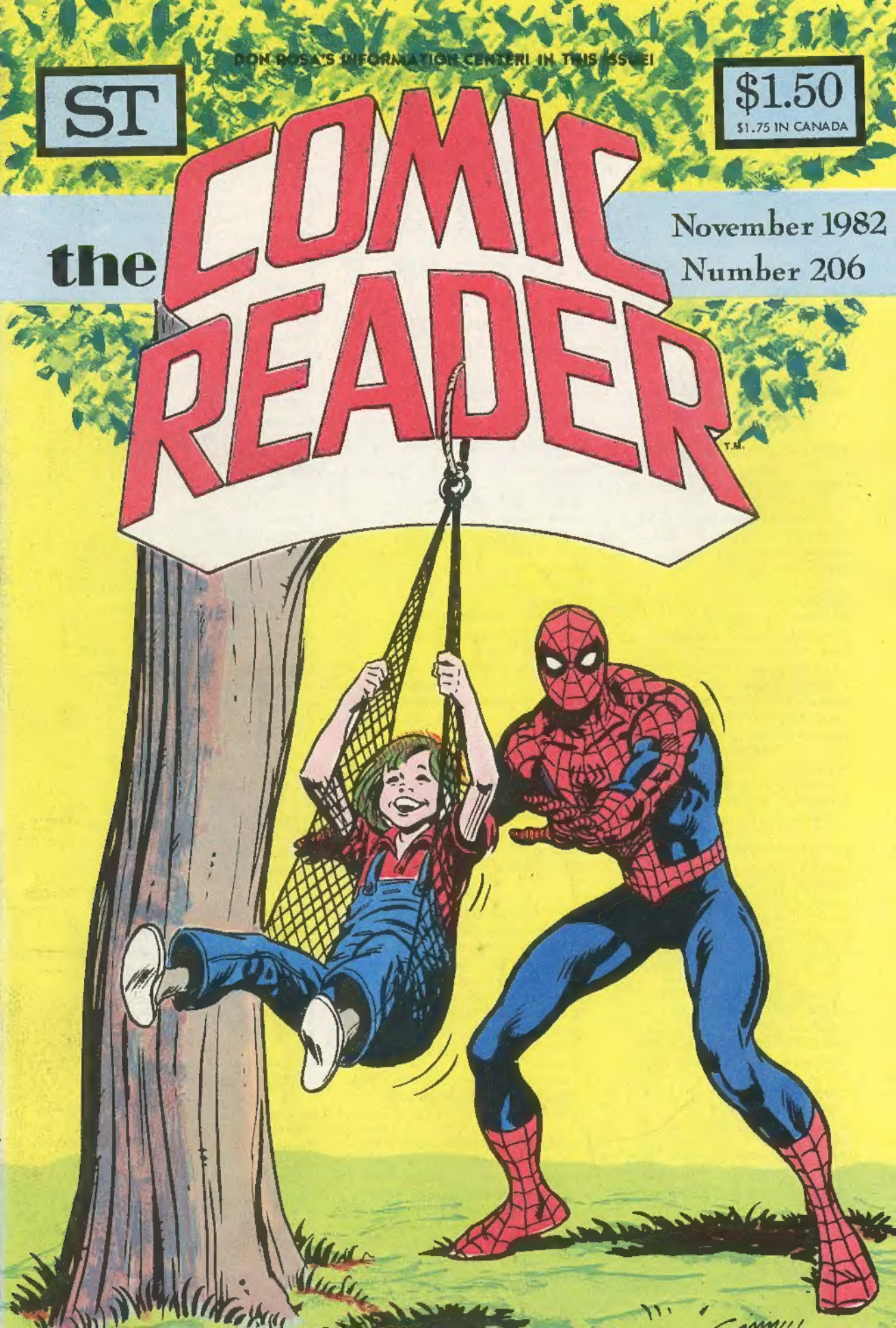
the COMIC READER

November 1982
Number 206



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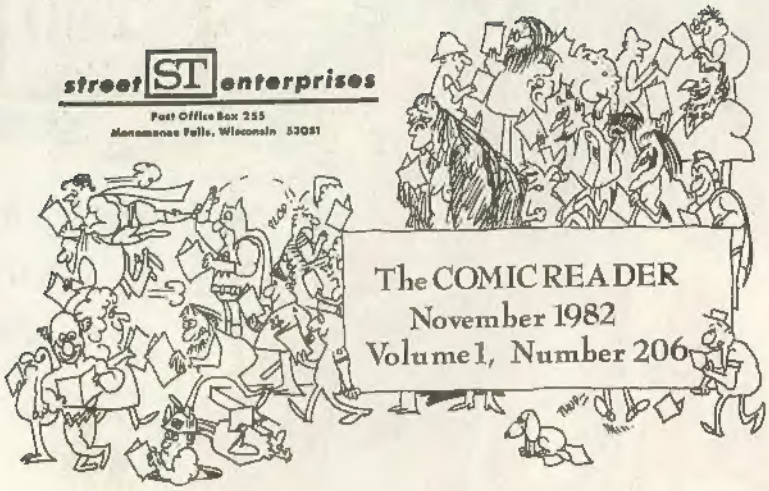

The COMIC READER
November 1982
Volume 1, Number 206

OUR COVERS: Kerry Gammill's illustration for the new Spider-Man Swing 'N' Web was good enough for a cover, so we used it. See Ron Massengill's column for details. On the back cover, Michael Mignola contributes his version of the Batman. Covers © 1982 Marvel Comics Group, and DC Comics Inc.

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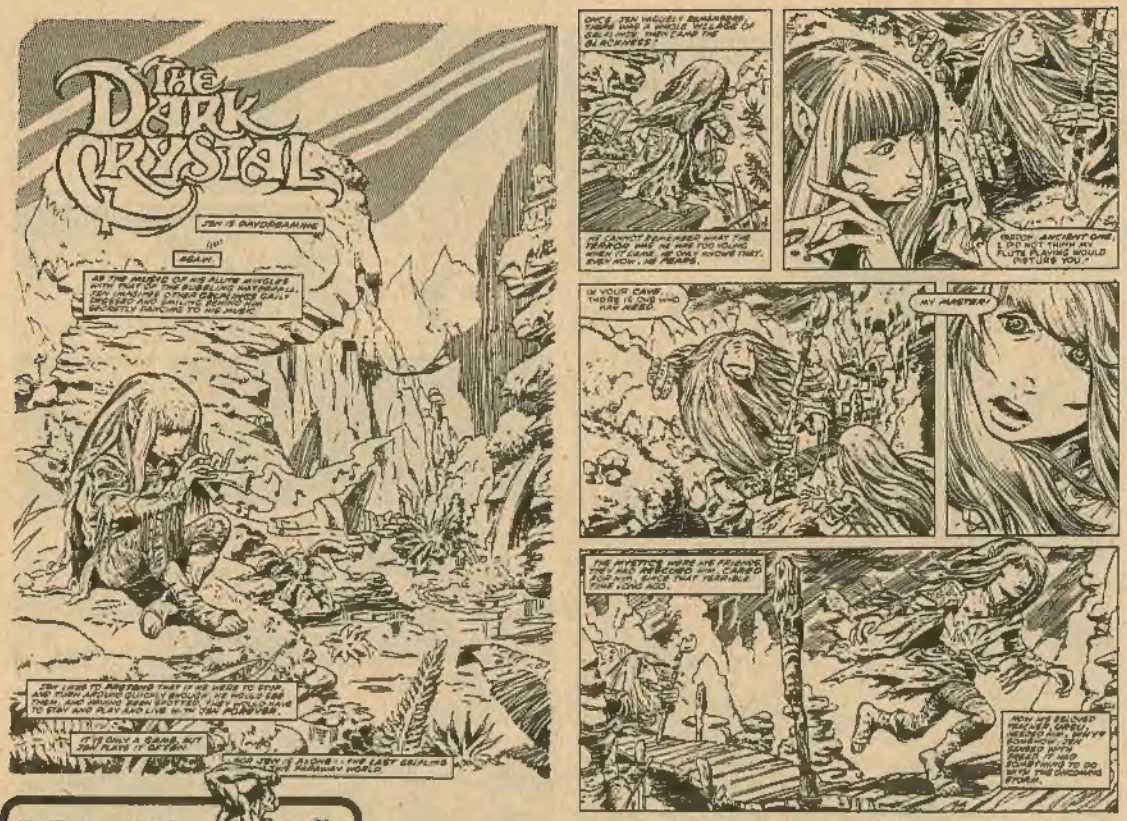
THE DARK CRYSTAL
JEN IS DAYDREAMING
AGAIN.
AS THE MUSIC OF HIS FLUTE MINGLES WITH THAT OF THE BUBBLING NATTERJILL, JEN IMAGINES HIMSELF GRACEFULLY AND EXPERTLY EXECUTING THE INTRICATE MOVES OF THE DANCE.
JEN LIVES TO ADVENTURE THAT IS HE WORKS TO STUDY AND FIGHT AGAINST QUICKLY ENOUGH, HE MOVES FOR THEM, AND DRIVING THEM BACKWARD. THEY RETREAT TO STAY AND PLAY AND LIVE IN THE FOREVER.
IT'S ONLY A GAME, BUT JEN PLAYS IT OFTEN.
NOW JEN IS ALONE IN THE LAST GRISLING DARKNESS WORLD.
ONCE, TEN VAGUELY REMEMBERED YEARS THAN A SINGLE VILLAGE OF GELFLING WERE FOUND THE DA MORNEES.
HE CANNOT REMEMBER WHAT THE TRAGEDY WAS HE WAS TOO YOUNG WHEN IT CAME. HE ONLY KNOWS THAT, EVEN NOW, HE REMAINS.
GELFLING ANCIENT ONE, I DID NOT THINK MY FLUTE PLAYING WOULD DISTURB YOU.
IN YOUR CAVE, THERE IS ONE WHO HAS HERE.
MY MASTER!
THE MYSTICS WERE NO FRIENDS OF THE GELFLING, AND CARED FOR THEM LITTLE SINCE THAT FEARSOME EVENT LONG AGO.
NOW HE BELIEVED THAT HE HAD NEEDED HIS HELP. HE HAD SUMMONED HIM FROM HIS SLEEP, AND THERE WAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE UNCOMING STORM.

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Above, sample pages from DARK CRYSTAL by Bret Blevins and Vince Colletta

Marvel News

Lots and lots of changes and stuff were announced by Marvel as tentative plans for their 1983 schedule were made available this month. We'll try to keep this as clear as possible:

There are four new regular books on the schedule. The first to appear will be THE THING, replacing MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE, which ends with #100. Scripted by John Byrne and drawn by Ron Wilson, the Thing's solo adventures will begin with #1.

The second new book also involves John Byrne. ALPHA FLIGHT features the heroes he created for the X-MEN with Chris Claremont, and it will be written and drawn by Byrne, probably inked by someone else.

Out in February of '83 will be a new series created by Mark Gruenwald and Ralph Macchio called CRYSTAR, which Remco will produce a toy from. Mary Jo Duffy will write with art by Bret Blevins and Vince Colletta. It concerns crystal people and alien worlds. Al Milgrom had a hand in directing the book's creation.

The fourth new series was also created by Al Milgrom: U.S. 1 is a new book featuring a pair of brothers who are truckers; the title derives from the name of one of them: Ulysses Simpson.

There are a shipload of new mini-series planned for '83. Some of these were announced previously, and some are brand new:

NIGHTCRAWLER by Chris Claremont and possibly Armando Gil follows the successful WOLVERINE mini-series of this year.

ILLYANA AND STORM by Claremont, featuring Colossus's sister and Storm of the X-Men.

CLOAK AND DAGGER by Bill Mantlo and Rick Leonardi, featuring the characters who have appeared in PETER PARKER.

THE SUB-MARINER by J. Marc De Matteis and Danny Bulanadi. Jim Shooter's longtime SUB-MARINER project with Alan Weiss has been put back into the drawer, apparently.

HERCULES by Bob Layton, a sequel to this years four-parter.

HAWKEYE by Mark Gruenwald (story and art). This has been previously announced.

WONDER MAN by David Michelinie. This one also has been mentioned in previous plans.

MACHINE MAN by Tom DeFalco and Herb Trimpe, in a treatment said to be in a slightly more humorous vein.

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THE GERMS ARE NO PUSH-OVERS, EVEN IF THEY ONLY HAVE ONE GUN TO A CAMPFIRE. WE'RE STILL IN BIG TROUBLE.
I HADDA ADMIT, SLINGER WAS RIGHT. WE WERE IN BIG TROUBLE.
I FELL ASLEEP THINKIN' ABOUT WALLOPIN' ON MY BETS.
THE DAWN CAME UP LIKE THUNDER!
WHOOM!
BYOW
WHUMP WHUMP
PAKKA PAKKA PAKKA
WHOUM
BANG
BANG
...AND WHEN IT GOT LIGHT ENOUGH...
I COULD SEE WE WERE GONNA HAVE A LOT MORE PLITTERS IN A FEW DAYS.

© 1982 WALT SIMONSON

Sample pages from Walt Simonson's STARSLAMMERS

© 1982 JIM STARLIN

Here are the covers for DREADSTAR #2 and 3 by Jim Starlin.

Machine Man has also been redesigned by Trimpe.

Ralph Macchio has been elevated to full editor status. The books he is editing are listed at the end of this section in the editorial assignment listings.

MANTIS, a tentative book by Denny O'Neil and Frank Miller, features a martial arts character that is no relation to the former Avenger. This project began in connection with a martial arts film personality, but the deal fell through and it may proceed on its own merits.

There are several one-shots also on tap. These include: SUPER-VILLAIN TEAM-UP, probably a reprint of the origin of Galactus from THOR; THE HULK VS. QUASIMODO, a TV tie-in to the new HULK cartoons, a la SPIDER-MAN AND HIS AMAZING FRIENDS from last year; OBNOXIO VS. THE X-MEN, a humorous book featuring the character from CRAZY MAGAZINE; a FUNNY ANIMALS one-shot, most probably featuring Marie Severin and Steve Mellor's Goose Rider. Also out next year will be the first new fumetti magazine from Marvel since the '60s humorous monster magazines, this one featuring the bullpen in strips in the vein of those which have appeared regularly in KA-ZAR THE SAVAGE.

The MARVEL GRAPHIC NOVEL series is also going full force. No fewer than seven projects have been added to those previously announced: SPIDER-MAN novels by both Bob Layton and Michael Golden; DR. STRANGE by Roger Stern; THE MYSTERIONS by Dave Cockrum; BLACK DRAGON by Chris Claremont and John Bolton; WONDERWAR by Alan Weiss; SCUFF by Alan Weiss; and SUPER FIGHTERS by Ron Wilson. Details of these separate projects will be announced as they come close to publication time.

As reported previously, there will be a few film adaptations for '83 set to appear in the various forms (color magazine SUPER SPECIALS, regular-size comic books, and paperback editions) their film adaptations have appeared in this year. These include THE REVENGE OF THE JEDI, KRULL by David Michelinie and Bret Blevins, STAR TREK III: THE SEARCH FOR SPOCK, and FIRE AND ICE.

For all of this activity, there had to be something to give in the other areas of the line, and thus several major changes will occur. As reported earlier, TEAM AMERICA ends with #12. It will be joined on the deceased pile by three other books: MASTER OF KUNG FU, which ends with #125, SPIDER-WOMAN, which ends with #50, and GHOST RIDER, which rides off with #81. The last named, according to editor Tom DeFalco, irretrievably ends with no possibility of a resurrection of the character with that particular issue.

All three direct-sales books will go bi-monthly as well, with MOON KNIGHT #31, KA-ZAR-THE SAVAGE #26 and MICRONAUTS #51. Also bi-monthly will be the resilient DAZZLER with #25. The reasons for the decrease in frequency in each of these cases was given as "creative setbacks." There has been a high turnover in artists on each of these books, more severe with the numerous new short-run projects which are far more attractive to artists than a long-term monthly series.

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Above we have the cover to the DOCTOR STRANGE SPECIAL EDITION by Berni Wrightson; below the Barry Windsor-Smith cover for EPIC #16.

In addition to all this, BIZARRE

© 1982, BARRY WINDSOR-SMITH

ADVENTURES has been made a thrice-yearly Baxter-paper magazine which will cost $2.00 and be distributed only through direct-sales routes.

DC and Marvel are working out details which would make the X-MEN/NEW TEEN TITANS specials an annual event. There will be two separate DC/Marvel team-ups in '83, the other involving the first meeting between the Justice League of America and the Avengers. A third team-up book is being talked about which would feature Spider-Man and Will Eisner's The Spirit. As plans currently call for John Romita to draw all the Spider-Man figures and Will Eisner all the Spirits, it should be a pretty bizarre looking comic book.

Here are some last issues as far as personnel go: Frank Miller's last DAREDEVIL is #191, Bill Sienkiewicz's last MOON KNIGHT is #30, and Doug Moench's final MASTER OF KUNG FU is #122. William Johnson is the artist replacing Gene Day on MASTER OF KUNG FU as of that issue. And speaking of Gene, his final issue of INDIANA JONES was #3, which was only half pencilled when he died. See this issue's obituaries department.

Here are some comics we never listed which appeared over the last few months: ROBERT E. HOWARD'S CONAN THE BARBARIAN #1, a reprint of "Red Nails" by Roy Thomas and Barry Smith, which appeared in mid-September, plus three TREASURY EDITIONS: G.I. JOE, A REAL AMERICAN HERO SPECIAL TREASURY EDITION #1, ANNIE TREASURY EDITION #1, and SMURFS #1 (Treasury Edition). We also (through no fault of our own, we might add, since we were told that all three issues would be shipped at the same time) skipped SMURFS #1 and 2, which appeared in the last two months. We actually had them on the lists and in the listings and took them out. With the newfound fascination Marvel now has with mini-series and one-shots, this is likely to happen again.

There are a number of photo-covers slated to appear featuring actors appearing in the costumes which have been seen in public appearances around the country, following the first new photo-cover in a long time which appeared on the double-size DAZZLER. MARVEL TEAM-UP #128 will feature Spider-Man and Captain America in a pic taken on

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the rooftop of the new Marvel building. The issue will also feature a five-page article as well as outtakes from the session, plus something described as "special color effects" inside. More details later. The final issue of SPIDER-WOMAN, #50, will also feature a photo-cover. It's a double-sized issue. Also slated to feature a photo-cover is KA-ZAR #26; it'll be interesting to see who they get to portray Zabu.

Furture developments in FANTASTIC FOUR include Sue Storm becoming pregnant again. Over in SPIDER-MAN, JJJ and Marla will be getting hitched, and in John Byrne's new ALPHA FLIGHT #1, two new members will join the team as they battle a villain called Tundra (not to be confused with Thundra) in a double-sized issue.

Upcoming villainy: Thor faces the all-new Crusader, as well as Dracula and Kamo Tharn in upcoming issues. Also in ensuing months, Iron Man will face Machine Man and Magma.

The new creative team on STAR WARS will be Denny O'Neil, Ron Frenz and Tom Palmer.

DAZZLER #25 is by Steven Grant, Marc Bright and Danny Bulanadi; Bob Hall is the new penciller on KA-ZAR as of #23; Klaus Janson is full artist on DAREDEVIL as of #192; Grant, Mike Vosburg and Chic Stone did G.I. JOE #9; Bill Mantlo, Sal Buscema and Steve Mitchell handle THE INCREDIBLE HULK AND QUASIMODO, out next month.

Alan Zelenetz will be the new THOR scripter, with Bob Hall doing the art. DAREDEVIL will feature scripts in the coming months by Alan Brennert, Larry Hama and Archie Goodwin.

More villains: The New Mutants take on the Sentinels, who apparently decide to take on the younger versions of the team they cannot beat, in THE NEW MUTANTS #2...Captain America battles the Scarecrow in #280 of his title...Power Man and Iron Fist run into Hammerhead, Man Mountain Marko and the Eel in their 92nd issue...Spider-Man battles the Gladiator in PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #77.

Marvel is entering the fanzine biz with a sixteen-page version of their current coming attractions advertisement/flyer advertising. Entitled MARVEL AGE #1, the magazine will ship the third week of each month and retail for 25¢. On sale in December.

Also on sale in December is BLIP #1, a comic-sized magazine devoted to video games. No word whether it will contain any comic material.

OBNOXIO VS. THE X-MEN #1 is out in January. Cover date is April.

According to DAILY VARIETY, Cadence Industries had total revenues of $128,450,000 in 1981, $34,345,000 of which was contributed by Marvel Comics. Marvel's profits for '81 were $4,394,000, which was the best showing of all of Cadence's companies. In a related matter, Cadence is apparently looking to raise capital to prevent a takeover by other parties, which may have something to do with the rash of easily repackaged direct-sales reprint

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books over the past few months. The non-returnable collectors' editions are a quick way to raise cash for the parent conglomerate.

In an attempt to make things easier for my own purposes, I will attempt to do an up-to-date listing of the current Marvel editorial assignments. This will undoubtedly change in a very short time, but it's correct as we go to press. The regularly-published titles are listed first in alphabetical order followed by the specials, mini-series and one-shot projects.

TOM DE FALCO: The Amazing Spider-Man, Marvel Tales Starring Spider-Man, Marvel Team-Up, Peter Parker The Spectacular Spider-Man; Cloak and Dagger, Hercules, Sub-Mariner; Spider-Man Graphic Novel (Layton)
MARK GRUENWALD: The Avengers, Captain America, Iron Man, The Official Handbook of the Marvel Universe, Thor; Super-Villain Team-Up
LARRY HAMA: Conan the Barbarian, Crazy Magazine; King Conan; Funny Animals, Machine Man, Mantis, Obnoxio vs. the X-Men, Fire and Ice, Star Trek III
LOUISE JONES: The Further Adventures of Indiana Jones, Ka-Zar the Savage, The New Mutants, Star Wars, The Uncanny X-Men; Fumetti Book, Illyana and Storm, Nightcrawler
RALPH MACCHIO: Crystar, Dazzler, Micronauts, Rom, U.S. 1, What If?; Kull the Conqueror, Wonder Man, Black Dragon Graphic Novel, Super Fighters Graphic Novel
AL MILGROM: The Defenders, Dr. Strange, Fantastic Four, The Incredible Hulk, Marvel Fanfare, Marvel Two-In-One; Warlock, Spider-Man Graphic Novel (Golden), Dr. Strange Graphic Novel, Mysterions Graphic Novel, Scuff Graphic Novel, Wonderwar Graphic Novel
DENNIS O'NEIL: Alpha Flight, Bizarre Adventures, Daredevil, G.I. Joe, Moon Knight, Power Man and Iron Fist; Hawkeye, Krull

EPIC COMICS

ARCHIE GOODWIN: Coyote, Dreadstar, Epic Illustrated

The plans for the new team of DEFENDERS members has been firmed and Marc De Matteis tells us the new team will debut in #126 following #125's double-sized conclusion to the Elf-In-quest plotline, which features the team in the far future, resulting in the departure of number of members. The remaining heroes decide to finally form a permanent team, which will consist of the Beast, the Angel, Iceman, Valkyrie, Gargoyle, Moondragon, and probably a new character a few months after that. They will have a bond of friendship which prompts their living together in the upper West Side townhouse, though they will also forge individual careers and identities besides. Following the formation, the team will face Professor Power and then have a good, old-fashioned mini-space epic. Marc describes the new theme of the book as "the family ties of the Fantastic Four...the student ties of the X-Men... and [the friendship] of the Defenders (well, in the case of Moondragon, "dear friend" won't exactly cover it--but there's gotta be one outcast in the bunch)."

And for the most bizarre news of the month, John Byrne has drawn both the interior and the cover of FANTASTIC FOUR #251 SIDEWAYS, so that the book will have to be read like a calendar. But that's not half as strange as the plans for AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #239, which will be printed MIRROR IMAGE, backwards. It's to tie in with a new product, a Spider-Man mirror--and it's uncertain whether the backwards issue (which could only be read by holding up to a mirror) will be THE #239 or simply a separate souvenir edition out in April.

DC News

DC's Atari-licensed comics, which are distributed only via their packaging in the game cartridges DEFENDER, BERSERK and STAR RAIDERS, have been joined by a second series. The first series was ATARI FORCE (the first two of which were reported some months back, the third of which we've just received featuring "Enter--the Dark Destroyer" by Gerry Conway, Roy Thomas, Gil Kane, Dick Giordano and Mike DeCarlo). The second series is tied in with the new SWORDQUEST game cartridges, and the first comic has appeared: "Earthworld" by Thomas, Conway, George Perez and Giordano. There will be four in the set of fantasy comics, the next three being "Fireworld," "Waterworld" and "Airworld." The comics are 5" x 7" and the game cartridges retail for $33.95. Perez designed a set of SWORDQUEST T-shirts, one for each chapter, and they're available only if you join the Atari Club and pre-order the four cartridges. You can call them at: 1-800-345-8600 (or 1-800-662-5180 if you live in Pennsylvania) for information.

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DC has hired Bruce Bristow as its Marketing Director, who will be in charge of expanding DC's distribution chiefly through concentration on the non-returnable sales market. He is the first marketing director in the comic-book publishing industry, according to DC.

Marv Wolfman, whose editorial duties have been divided between him and Ernie Colon, is becoming a free-lance editor, spending less time at the DC offices.

Now we know why THE BRAVE AND THE BOLD was cancelled. BATMAN AND THE OUTSIDERS is the replacement book for artist Jim Aparo and regular writer Mike W. Barr. The

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book is scheduled to appear in the Spring, and DC is keeping the membership of the Outsiders a secret for the nonce.

DC had announced a DEADMAN mini-series, to begin in April, and to be drawn by Trevor Von Eeden. That project has been discontinued for the moment, but a new one has sprung up in its place: THE GREEN ARROW. It's written by Gary Cohn and Dan Mishkin and drawn by Von Eeden. It should appear around the same time as the other series was supposed to.

AMETHYST, PRINCESS OF THE GEMWORLD finally appears almost a year after its first announced starting date as a preview section in LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES #298 (out in January), and follows that up with a first issue in February. It's written and created by Dan Mishkin and Gary Cohn, and drawn by Ernie Colon.

DETECTIVE #526 marks the 500th anniversary of Batman's first appearance in DETECTIVE, and the occasion will be honored in the form of a 64-page Mando-paper edition which will cost $1.50. It's the conclusion of the King Croc story written by Gerry Conway, and it also marks Conway's last issue. The issue goes on sale in February.

That character we mentioned last issue as appearing in the upcoming Batman adventures who will be taken under the Caped Crusader's wing will become the new hero known as Robin. Dick Grayson, meanwhile, will appear under his own name in THE NEW TEEN TITANS--with the probability of gaining a new nickname sometime in the future.

The first issue of OMEGA MEN is also slated to appear in January. It will be DC's first ongoing series on the Baxter paper (see CAMELOT 3000). The members of the team starring in the first issue include: Primus, Kalista, Tigorr, Nimbus and Broot. Roger Slifer, Keith Giffen and Mike DeCarlo are the creative team.

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A new member of the Teen Titans debuts in this month's issue of NEW TEEN TITANS--Terra. She will join officially in #31 or 32.

July cover dates will be affixed to Frank Miller's new martial arts book (working title: RONIN) as well as the first of the 1983 Annuals. This is the 1983 annual schedule:

July covers: DC COMICS PRESENTS #2
JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA #1
August: SGT. ROCK #3
NEW TEEN TITANS #2
September: LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES #2, SUPERMAN #9
October: BATMAN #9
WARLORD #2
November: ALL-STAR SQUADRON #2
FURY OF FIRESTORM #1

Doug Moench's first issues have been nailed down for the books he will be permanent writer on: BATMAN #360, DETECTIVE COMICS #527 and WORLD'S FINEST #289. He will also write origin issues of ARION, LORD OF ATLANTIS (#4 and 5).

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Joe Staton and George Freeman did the art for Staton's final DC job before going to First fulltime: a Batman/Catwoman story for BRAVE AND BOLD.

The artists and not the writer of the SUPERMAN syndicated strip have been changing like a lava lamp lately, with penciller Jose Delbo's inks metamorphosizing from Vince Colletta to Bob Smith to Frank McLaughlin to Sal Trapani--and then Jose Delbo changing back into George Tuska. It's all plenty confusing for those newspapers who attempt to put the artists names on the masthead above the strip.

Eclipse News

Cat Yronwode, to almost no one's surprise, has been hired as Assistant Editor and Traffic Manager concomitant with Dean Mullaney's move of the editorial offices to 105 Austin Avenue, Columbia, MO 65201 (the address to which all submissions, letters of comment, etc. should be sent). She will assist Dean in the editing of all titles except DESTROYER DUCK, which is edited by Steve Gerber.

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BY MARK EVANIER AND WILL MEUGNIOT

Jerry Siegel has joined Eclipse with a new creation entitled THE STARLING. Val Mayerik is the artist for the strip, which will appear in the eight-page back-up slot in DESTROYER DUCK. The Starling features an alien known only as the Glowing Man who comes to Earth with powers and abilities far beyond those of mortal etc. Siegel, who has had quite a few headaches in the past over the copyright to his characters (most notably you know who) will retain full copyright on this one. He's quoted as saying, "Back in the depression days of the thirties, I started the super-hero comic book phenomenon. Now, in the Outrageous Eighties, almost half a century later, I have originated a new super-hero, the Starling. I am pleased that Eclipse has given me the opportunity to write super-hero comics scripts again. If the Starling is a rather wild super-hero, blame it on these crazy times. We are all dancing down the Red Brick Road toward... what?!"

Frank Miller will be doing pin-ups of famous detectives Mike Hammer, Sam Spade and Philip Marlowe for consecutive issues of MS. TREE'S THRILLING DETECTIVE ADVENTURES. Each will be the two-page centerspread of the first three issues, along the lines of the DC pin-up series of the '60s.

SCORPIO ROSE and DESTROYER DUCK will be printed on Baxter stock and will cost $1.50. The other books in the line will remain on Mando stock for $1.00.

There will be a new Baxter, $1.50 title added in March, however: THE DNAGENTS will be by Mark Evanier and Will Meugniot (pronounced, in case you were wondering, "Evan-ear," and "Min-yo") and will feature 28-page stories in a monthly format. The DNAgents are described as being a team of genetically-enhanced characters created under the aegis of a multi-national conglomerate to do the conglomerate's bidding--or so the company thinks. The genetic manipulation was supposed to make the team obedient and unquestioning of the missions they are sent on, but it doesn't quite work. The leader of the group is called Surge, charged with massive doses of energy which can be expended at will, and he's the only one of the group totally comfortable with being more than human. Sham is a chameleon-type who can emulate anyone in looks and voice, but who feels like he has no identity of his own. Rainbow is a super-acrobatic with the power to project mental images into opponents brains. Tank is the muscle-man, with the strength of ten to twenty normal men, with the desire to become a "real human." And

Amber is "unfettered by gravity" and the team's free spirit. The team is shown in the illustration above.

Following COYOTE's final appearance in ECLIPSE #8, the Steve Englehart-Marshall Rogers stories will be collected and printed in full color in a special edition this spring from Eclipse. ECLIPSE MAGAZINE will be undergoing a format change following that issue.

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Eclipse has also begun a Hall of Fame series of trade paperbacks commencing with WOMEN AND THE COMICS written and edited by Trina Robbins and Cat Yronwode, which will go on sale in April at $9.95. The heavily illustrated book series will be 136 pages on 70 pound matte paper featuring eight pages in color, and this entry will feature the careers of female cartoonists including Rose O'Neill, Grace Drayton, Edwina Dumm, Dale Messick, Cathy Guisewhite, Lynn Johnston, Tarpe Mills, Marie Severin, Ramona Fradon, Wendy Pini, the Fiction House "jungle girl" artists, underground cartoonists and Europeans.

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*DESTROYER DUCK No. 2, February. Eclipse's waddling hero returns in his own bi-monthly title, and in this issue he faces murderous Medea and the Dislocated Spine in a story by Steve Gerber, Jack Kirby and Alfredo Alcala. The back-up feature is the debut of "The Starling" by Jerry Seigel and Val Mayerik. The cover is by Kirby and Alcala. [11/9-11/11]

Harvey News

Reader Paul Gilbert tells us that Harvey has issued only two comics in August and September instead of their normal thirty titles every two months. He was told that the slowdown was the result of schedule revision and they would soon resume full publishing. The two issues appeared in the first week of September and bore December cover dates. None appeared in August.

In the meantime, Harvey is crowing about the ratings on the new RICHIE RICH SHOW WITH PAC-MAN AND THE LITTLE RASCALS, as they surpassed both the SHIRT TALES and SMURFS on NBC and SYLVESTER AND TWEETY/DAFFY AND SPEEDY and BUGS BUNNY/ROAD RUNNER on CBS by a 40% to 28% to 16% margin. It's argumentative whether it's RICHIE RICH who's in the cause of this (PAC-MAN would seem to be the big draw here), but it does put ABC in first place for the first week at least, up from third last season.

Krupp News

Kitchen Sink has contracted with Milton Caniff to do a magazine series in the SPIRIT format which will reprint STEVE CANYON from the beginning. Shel Dorf is the editor, and all dailies and Sundays, as well as a scrapbook of other Caniff artwork will comprise the magazines, which will debut in January.

THE ART OF WILL EISNER is at the printers and should be shipped out in late October. The paperback edition is $10.95 and has been previously described in this department. The hardcover, limited-to-1000 edition ($18.95) is out in mid-November.

THE SPIRIT COLOR ALBUM #2 is being printed in Europe with thirteen full-color SPIRIT stories, which Denis Kitchen describes as "much better than

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#1" in quality of color. Included are the classic Sand Saref stories from 1950. The book is a hardcover, and retails for $13.95.

THE SPIRIT No. 36, February. This issue features the very first SPIRIT story, printed in color to begin the chronological series of full-color early section reprints. Also included, besides a selection of vintage reprints, is a new eighteen-page Will Eisner story, "The Sentinels." Eisner did the cover. New price is $2.95. [November]

Pacific News

Pacific has added a Bruce Jones science-fiction companion title to TWISTED TALES called ALIEN WORLDS. On sale in December, the first issue, printed on Baxter paper for $1.50, features Jones stories drawn by Al Williamson, Val Mayerik, Nestor Redondo and Tim Conrad. The cover is by Joe Chiodo.

WILD ANIMALS #1, which is

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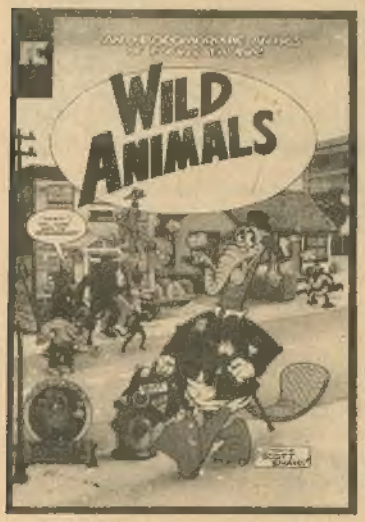
on sale in November, had its contents changed before publication. The listing below reflects the new contents. (Our description was of the book as originally prepared for Kitchen Sink.)

Pacific will be publishing THE ART OF AL WILLIAMSON by James Van Hise sometime in the future. Al Williamson gave his full cooperation and contributed a new cover, and the book is said to contain previously unpublished work.



WILD ANIMALS No. 1, February. "The Land That Time Ignored" is by Scott Shaw! and features his character You-All Gibbon. Other strips included in this collection of funny-animal strips are by Sergio Aragones, Larry Gonick, Rick Geary, Jim Engel, George Erling and Brian Narelle. The cover, which was done like an animation cel, is by Scott Shaw! [11/8-11/11]

Whitman News

No new word on any movement on the part of Whitman's comics division. Whitman Executive Editor Wallace Green did send us a copy of the TOM AND JERRY CRAZY CAPERS pocketbook, a nice little package as far as paper quality is concerned, though it is printed in black-and-white in disassembled page form as most paperbacks are. It does mark a return to use of Baxter-quality paper on a comic book for Whitman, who last used the white paper on their Dynabrite series in the mid-'70s and STARSTREAM.

Warren News

Douglas Gladstone has been appointed Editorial Assistant, apparently replacing David Allikas. Meanwhile, Forrest J. Ackerman has stepped down as editor of FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND as of #190 after having edited all 180 issues of the magazine (issues #70-79 were skipped), as well as all issues of MONSTER WORLD, SPACEMEN, SCREEN THRILLS ILLUSTRATED, and FAMOUS FILMS.

THE GOBLIN's final issue was #3, not #4 which was listed in the last issue. No reason was given for the newly-born magazine's cancellation, though low early sales must have had something to do with it.

The Rich Margopoulos/Luis Bermejo adaptation of A.E. Van Vogt's "Voyage of the Space Beagle" will appear in EERIE #139, out in December.

Coming Comics

EERIE No. 138, January. Included: Don McGregor's "The Mist," the final chapter of the Sherlock Holmes story, "Study In Scarlet," the debut of E.R. Cruz's "Glythis," and a color insert called "Granny Gutman and the Limbo Men" by Fred Carrillo. [11/2]

CREEPY No. 144, January. An adaptation of Poe's "Berenice," plus "The Ghouls," "Forgotten Flesh" and "In Darkness It Shall End." [11/9]

VAMPIRELLA No. 111, January. An 88-page reprint edition featuring "The Curse of the McDaemon's" and "Undead of the Deep" by Jose Gonzales. [11/16]

FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND No. 190, January. [11/16]

TCR Mailboat

ROGER STERN, Ithaca, NY 14850: Remember those outrageous fan rumors of yesteryear? Remember the false reports of Stan Lee and Jack Kirby embezzling money from Marvel...or of Mort Weisinger's planned sword and sorcery comic...or of Marvin Wolfman being fired by Marvel's editor-in-chief (in the days when Marv WAS the editor-in-chief)...or of Reverend Moon buying DC Comics? Remember all of those phony reports, half-truths, and outright fabrications?

Remember TCR #205?

Come on, guys, get real!

I couldn't believe the nonsense you were printing this month! First, you started off with a second-hand report, based on hearsay from so-called "informed sources"...a report alluding to non-existent editorial "dictums," I might add. And then, to complicate the crime, you presented an editorial which treated all of that malarkey as if it were proven fact.

Is this THE COMIC READER, or some screwball fanzine parody of THE NATIONAL ENQUIRER? I haven't read such bunk since the bad-old-days of the mid-1970s. Yes, Doug Moench probably did resign because of disagreements with Jim Shooter...there is that much fact in the opening item. The rest reads like neurotic ramblings of someone's very troubled imagination.

Simply put, what you have reported (and if ever that verb was used loosely--!) is wrong. And by the very act of publishing it along with that editorial, you have undoubtedly misled some of your readers into believing something which is little more than a pack of lies.

Why? Didn't the sheer absurdity of this story even once suggest to you that it was so much hooey? Didn't you once consider calling the Marvel offices to check it out? As I know you folks have a phone, there's no excuse for the appearance of this baloney in TCR.

Furthermore, by what power of what divinity do you, Mr. Tiefenbacher, dare to cast aspersions on the degree of Jim Shooter's love of Marvel Comics? Your editorial comments only prove to me that you don't have the vaguest idea of what Jim Shooter is like.

You owe two apologies...one to Mr. Shooter and one to your readership.

[I apologize to Mr. Shooter, not having even the slightest personal familiarity with him or his personality or feelings beyond what he has been stated as saying in his interviews. From that I inferred the feelings I got about his feelings toward Marvel's past history. I am sorry if they were incorrect.

I am also delighted to hear that none of that reported rumor is true. However, in all faimess, it did not appear in the news section, it appeared in a separate commentary section, where I made it clear that it was taken from Cat Yronwode's column in THE BUYER'S GUIDE.

Why no call to confirm or deny? She'd already done it. She'd gotten the denial, and I expected as much. Why reprint it? I trust her, that's why. She doesn't capriciously start or print rumors, and I don't believe she thought this to be a groundless rumor either.

Enough irreversible and outrageous things have been done to characters at Marvel and DC over the past ten years that I had heard about well before they happened that I felt that I had to make a stand beforehand this time--even if I ended up looking as bad as you say. I felt the stakes were big enough this time that I wasn't going to sit idly by and allow something to

happen when I could have contributed to swaying editorial opinion in your offices.

Obviously, you guys have been swamped with mail from outraged fans. The editorial by Mr. Shooter in the latest Bullpen Bulletins about this subject says as much...and we'll never know how true any of this stuff ever was. But I felt it important that we reprint the rumor. And I doubt that many people accepted it as hard fact, chiseled in stone.

To answer your question: nope. I NEVER heard ANY of those rumors listed at the beginning of your letter. MT]

DON GLUT, Burbank, CA: I can think, offhand, of one Marvel superhero with a "blue" name that you left out of the list in TCR #205--the Blue Streak, who was one of the SHIELD Super-Agents who first appeared in CAPTAIN AMERICA #217. I scripted that story over Roy Thomas's plot and John Buscema's pencils. It was actually Roy who created the Blue Streak character, but I gave him the name (after, for all Chicago-trivia fans, a roller coaster at the regrettably demolished Riverview amusement park) and personality.

JIM TRUE, 5 Autumn Leaf Drive, Apt. 23, Nashua, NH 03060: It's been too long since I've written to tell you how much I still look forward to TCR each month. TCR is still THE source for news. The writers in other magazines (I cannot call periodicals such as THE COMICS JOURNAL fanzines) spend so much time trying to impress the readers with fancy vocalublary and references to obscure writers and artists that they forget to write interesting articles. TCR is a fanzine with no pretensions.

Like you, Mike, I am apprehensive about what Cat wrote in THE BUYER'S GUIDE, about the imminent deaths of Shang-Chi, Steve Rogers, Tony Stark, and others. But at the same time, I agree with Jim Shooter that a major problem exists and is getting worse monthly at both DC and Marvel, especially at Marvel: the respective universes are getting much too complicated. You ask in your article if a new Marvel reader cares that the Marvel Universe is so complicated. "No," you say, "they revel in the complication." But I wonder how many potential readers Marvel has lost because those readers gave up trying to figure out the hopeless maze of relationships and past history. Things have gotten so bad that both Marvel and DC plan to publish handbooks to unravel the respective universes. Get your programs here! You can't tell the players without your programs! How long do you think it will take before a writer decides to ignore the handbook for the sake of an interesting story (I still wonder how DC will explain that Don and Hank Hall aged while the rest of the Teen Titans have remained young)?

Something drastic has to be done to clean up the mess that has been developing for over twenty years. Wholesale killing and replacement is not the answer, however. We have a new Captain Marvel, but references to the old will complicate matters for the newer readers. My preference would be total revampment as Julius Schwartz did when he revived the Flash, Green Lantern, the Atom, and Hawkman. A TOTALLY new universe. But I would take it one step further and NEVER, under any circumstances, allow the new universe to mix with the old. (I would also stop the wars in the Middle East and Northern Ireland, and get the Soviets out of Afghanistan.)

On another matter, I agree with you that the use of English by some supposedly professional writers is atrocious. Therefore, it is with some smugness that I correct you on what you say is the incorrect use of the apostrophe in plurals. According to FUNK AND WAGNALLS STANDARD DESK DICTIONARY, "The plural of a letter or a number is formed by adding 's, although it should be noted that there is a growing trend to drop the apostrophe where years are concerned." Some examples they used were, "watch your ABC's," "a company of GIs," and "the 1970's." This usage was agreed to by WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD DICTIONARY OF THE AMERICAN LANGUAGE. MERRIAM-WEBSTER'S THIRD NEW INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY lists the following as correct plurals: GI's, GIs; PhD's, PhDs; Ph.D.'s, Ph.D.s. Following a dictionary's standard of listing preferred usage first, clearly the apostrophe is appropriate when referring to a collection of DC's. Welcome to the '80's.

[Uhh, right. Well, it seems every time I attempt to cite anything to do with grammar, I get corrected. Clearly, our office dictionary (a pocketbook, if you must know) is inadequate to the task, so unless Jerry springs for a good desk dictionary with grammatical usage in it, I'll cease the lecturing.

On the other hand, usage of the apostrophe in the way mentioned seems far more confusing than the equally readable (and apparently acceptable) non-use of it. So I'll continue to do it the way I've seen it used in most current magazines, i.e., sans apostrophe in cases involving years, and "DCs."

And thanks for not pointing out the numerous typos in that column pointing out others' errors. ("Trail balloon"? "Announcenouncement"?) The back of the book is the last thing to be proofread, and unfortunately, I had been up 26 hours when I did it. My apologies.

I've said my piece about the Marvel Universe already, so I won't restate it here. However, as far as starting over from scratch, your parallel with the FLASH revivol is imperfect for a very good reason: the current one is still popular and still being published. Starting over from scratch would accomplish very little, in my opinion. After all--isn't that the exact thing that Pacific, First and the other new companies are doing? MT]

GERRY DESROSIERS, 1111 Arlington Blvd., No. 339, Arlington, VA 22209: I've just completed my tenth year as a subscriber to TCR. In that time, how many incarnations have there been of what remains my favorite fan publication? No matter, your current issues have been superb, and it's a pleasure to sign on for another year.

Some comments regarding your "unsolicited" opinions in TCR #205:

Shooter is much maligned. Not least of his crimes is that he's no Stan Lee. In personality, at least. It may be that as a creator Stan was really Kirby or Ditko, but as a showman, Stan Lee was THE Man. Shooter is tall, but otherwise unassuming.

I doubt that he's trying to redo Marvel in his image--or striving for a comics universe that he can "understand." More likely, he's trying to revitalize some pretty tired properties. Captain America, Thor, and Iron Man still have great POTENTIAL, but nothing is happening to realize "the dream." I disagree that the death and resurrection of the characters is what's needed. But is that any worse than Jay Garrick falling asleep in 1951 and waking up five years later as Barry Allen?

Still, I'm unmoved by this controversy; my sentiments are with DC. Happily, these days, it's a resurgent DC.

Like you, I'm troubled by the age of the contemporary JSAers. Golden Agers indeed!

In MY cosmology, Earth-One and Earth-Two coexist in space and SIDEREAL time (i.e., where each new earth is, in relation to the age and "place" of its universe), but are different in chronological time. "Here and now" for Earth-Two is 1942 (which is why it can be called Earth-Two), and the real contemporaries to OUR JLA are the JSA/All-Star Squadron of the war years. (Maybe the Squadron is the Earth-Two version of the Titans; there are some parallels: Cyborg/Robotman/Steel; Johnny Quick/Kid Flash; Plastic Man/Changeling; Firebrand/Starfire...)

Of course, there may also be links between universes along chronological (or mythic) lines, accounting for the "modern" JSA and the team-ups of the past 21 years. That leaves the age question begging, however. It would be better to treat those stories as apocryphal, perhaps, and to continue along a more

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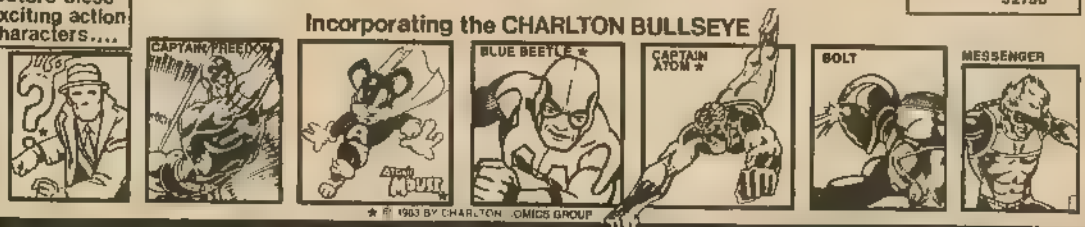

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logical path.

So, here and now on Earth-Two it's mid-1942. It's a time when that earth is in its greatest peril, and destiny has called forth its greatest champions. They are engaged in a great war... ...WHOSE OUTCOME IS VERY MUCH IN QUESTION.

Why kill the suspense, eh? More to the point, why not lend flexibility to the development of the Earth-Two characters? If there can be a female Firebrand, why not a Hispanic Black Condor (El Condor Negro), a Chinese Phantom Lady, a female Red Bee, a 1940 Power Girl, etc.?

Finally, and apropos of nothing in particular, I have a fundamental question that needs answering. Anyone can take it: old Keno Don; Roy Thomas; Jenette Kahn; Shazam; Nelson Bridwell. Why is it that Captain Marvel, the original (only) quintessential world's mightiest mortal, is not given free flight in the DC universe?

Is there some restriction in the supposed fifteen-year agreement between DC and Fawcett? What happens in five years?

Why isn't Captain Marvel (okay, "Shazam!") marketed more agressively? I mean, why not a regular berth in ACTION COMICS, for instance; a regular team-up with Superman (an AMERICA'S GREATEST COMICS companion to WORLD'S FINEST); membership in the JLA or, at least, the All-Star Squadron (Junior joins the Teen Titans!), or something more than a pint-sized reprint slot in ADVENTURE?

Do you realize how many extra copies of SUPERMAN must be sold whenever the M. of S. encounters a doppleganger: Vartax; Superman-Red; Mon-El; Supergirl; et al.? Doesn't DC realize that a frequent, friendly rivalry between the two big fellas would boost the sales for both? Who better to help Superman keep his identity secret than a Big Red Cheese cleverly disguised as the Man of Steel while Clark meets a deadline?

I've been waiting for years for that kind of development. Wishful thinking until ten years ago--agonizing frustration since then.

And while I'm on this tack--why doesn't Marvel just relinquish the name (yeah, yeah, for MONEY). Couldn't they have called their newest character Captain Amazon, or Captain Electric?

[Again, the difference in Jay Garrick's evolution into Barry Allen was that Jay wasn't killed off in the process. Retire as many people as you like, but don't kill them--my emotional-twelve-year-old rule, which I attempt to keep living in my head to recall the feelings I had when I was the age most comics buyers are now. That longtime feeling was a direct corollary to the other desire I had as a twelve-year-old: everybody should meet everybody, or the Gang Tackle Syndrome.

Which leads directly into your question about Captain Marvel: why he isn't in the JLA. Natch, that was the first question in my mind in '73 when they revived him, and when I asked Paul Levitz the reason he stated that there were business obstacles. Later conversations indicated that DC has to pay Fawcett a licensing fee each time Captain Marvel appears, and unless it's necessary to the book (i.e., the recent DC COMICS PRESENTS team-ups with Superman), it isn't deemed worth the fee to make him part of a team which likely would sell as well without him. SHAZAM! has had plenty of chances over the past ten years to show its sales prowess, and it hasn't. Unless the agreement with Fawcett is like the one DC had with Quality--that is, DC acquires the full rights after a certain period, and can then use the character to its heart's content (BLACKHAWK was prevented from appearing in the first issue of SECRET ORIGINS in '61 for this same reason)--you won't see the Captain in the Justice League.

Your explanation for the All-Star Squadron's being "real" current Earth-Two time in relation to the JLA doesn't hold up simply because Roy has not been approaching the book that way at all. Historical references have been true to the "real" world, and the Per Degaton stories have cemented the '40s' characters' relationships to the current Earth-Two world. It seems rather silly, actually, to declare the fifty or so '60s/'70s/'80s stories apocryphal when there have been fewer than twenty issues of ALL-STAR SQUADRON published. And there already is a Phantom Lady on Earth-Two, with little chance of a '40s Power Girl (in my estimation).

Continuity is only a bugaboo if it is the ONLY purpose of a story. I doubt that new readers are put off by footnotes referring to previous issues; after all, the number on the cover is a large clue that SOMETHING's gone before. And if single-issue, non-continuity was what sold, DC wouldn't have nearly abandoned it to follow Marvel's lead.

Not that you're doing it, but I rather resent the fact that suddenly the fact that a number of fans (of which I count myself) wish to see the characters' lives we read about make some kind of sense in a linear fashion, that they have a memory of their previous life's occurances, and refer back to them as we ourselves would, is being considered by the companies as being overly restrictive and bad for sales. If sales are falling or being hurt, it isn't because of that, I'm sure. MT]

ANDREW JOHNSTON, 227 Harvest Drive, Charlottesville, VA 22901: It's September 25th, and I have just finished watching this week's INCREDIBLE HULK/AMAZING SPIDER-MAN HOUR on NBC, and I've been really surprised by its quality. Last week--the origin of Iceman. This week--the origin of the Hulk, the origin of Firestar, plus a new X-Men crossover. I was really surprised that they decided to do Wolverine. I thought the network would consider him too "disturbing" a character. Anyhow, I have seen most of the new Saturday morning shows, and to my surprise, not many are very good. The worst ones have to be PAC-MAN, GILLIGAN'S PLANET and THE GARY COLEMAN SHOW. The best are THE INCREDIBLE HULK, FLASH GORDON, (surprisingly) THE LITTLE RASCALS, and the JOHAN AND PEEWIT segments on THE SMURFS. I (a diehard fan of French comics) was especially surprised to find J&P, but after all, the Smurfs are a spinoff of one of J&P's early albums (LA FLUTE A SIX SCHTROUMPHS). I also saw (and taped) ABC's MODESTY BLAISE pilot. Ann Turkel was great, as Modesty, but, alas, there will probably be no subsequent series. My local NBC affiliate has been preempting THE POWERS OF MATTHEW STAR, so I have not been able to see it yet.

A recent issue of TIME had in the PEOPLE section a photo of Richard Pryor "in costume" for SUPERMAN III. His outfit consists of: jeans, a blue shirt, a khaki windbreaker, skis, and a pink tablecloth as a cape. Last week's issue of the STAR, hyping an "Exclusive Superman III color preview," said in the accompanying article that the film will have lots of "Hope and Crosby-style slapstick." I think it's going to be Camp City, folks. Any casting news about SUPERGIRL yet? I think Lisa Whelchel of NBC's FACTS OF LIFE would be perfect.

[Frankly, I think Lisa would have a tough time of it attempting to get enough lift to overcome the drag of her excess weight for the flying scenes.

Our NBC affiliate is preempting the HULK/SPIDER-MAN HOUR (for FLIPPER and GENTLE BEN reruns) so I can't comment on it (see Darrell McClure's letter in last issue's TCR for explanations behind the inclusion of Wolverine). I too was impressed by the artwork (especially) of THE LITTLE RASCALS. I haven't seen much else as yet, though I will say that PANDAMONIUM is particularly badly drawn, especially compared to the Marvel super-hero shows. (The other Marvel show, MEATBALLS AND SPAGHETTI, is being preempted by our CBS affiliate.)

I was ambivalent about the MODESTY pilot; while grudgingly accepting the fundamental change in the character of the whole thing by moving it to California from London, I couldn't bring myself to accept a Wil-

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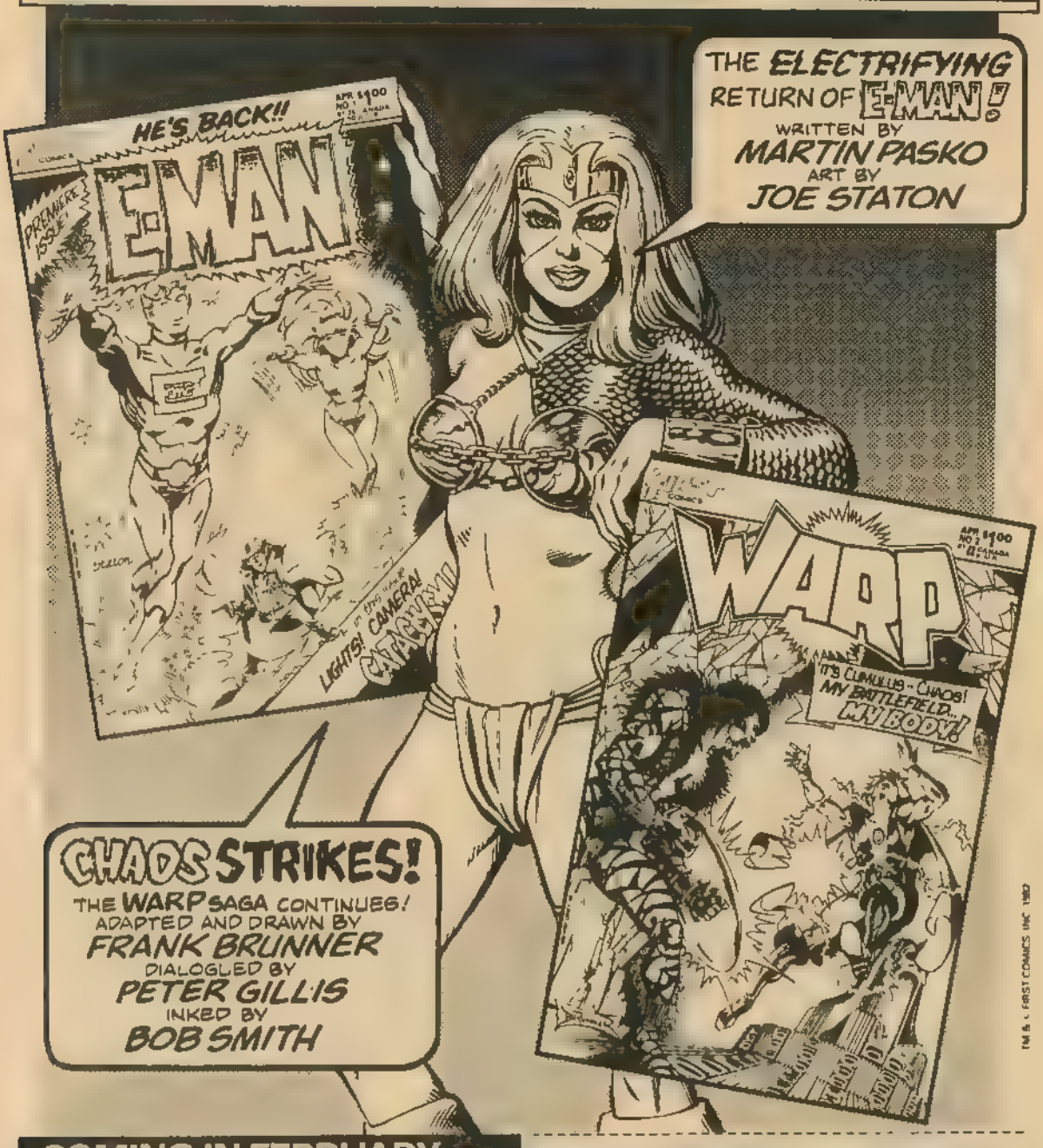

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lie Garvin with a Bronx accent. Modesty, being of non-specific European origin (even in this version), could be believable with an American accent; nothing in the character's origin in this pilot insisted that Willie NOT be English. (Why U.K. TV hasn't done a MODESTY series is beyond me; they might have done it right.) On the other hand, the characterization was close enough to be satisfying, and I wasn't really bothered by the obvious tongue-in-cheek platline. It WAS better than the Monica Vitti film of '66, though. Don't write off its chances of going to series; if the pilot did well enough, ABC might be persuaded to try it again.

You're not missing much by not seeing THE POWERS OF MATTHEW STAR. Rather humorless high-school stuff, reminding me of SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN in tone. MT]

DANIEL MISHKIN, Lansing, MI: When Gary Cohn and I created THE BLUE DEVIL, we had no idea that we'd be making comics history by giving DC its first "Blue" hero. We thought we'd merely be presenting to the world an exciting, dynamic, flat-out fun, rollicking action/adventure series, showcasing the incredible artwork of talented newcomer Paris Cullins (a man, I might add, who really loves his work...and it shows) --but if we can help set right a situation of long-standing neglect in the bargain, well, why not? (Although as George Carlin points out, there is no blue food.)

Regarding your sidewise reference to the non-appearance of AMETHYST, PRINCESS OF THE GEMWORLD, rest assured that it has only been delayed--not cancelled--and that having adjusted to his new editorial duties and finished a bunch of special projects, Ernie Colon is now pulling out the stops to produce some truly marvelous art (both pencils and inks, Sam Kujava will be pleased to note). The unexpectedly-long time that Gary and I have had since we first got the go-ahead for AMETHYST has worked in our favor, I think, allowing us to do more long-range plotting and planning and to avoid early missteps--from Todd Klein's snazzy logo on, we're planning to make every aspect of the book the best it can be, and you can judge our success for yourself in February, when the Preview will appear in THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES.

In the meantime, my thanks to you and TCR for keeping the fun in fandom.

[And my apologies in allowing everyone to think that the Blue Devil WOULD be DC's first "blue" hero. Just after #205 went to press, I happened to be reading a history of the Rolling Stones in some periodical and their group's original name reminded me that I'd forgotten a forties character (and group) who carried the color in question: Little Boy Blue and the Blue Boys. The reversed adjective order was what threw me... MT]

JOHN R. MORRIS, 323 14th Avenue West, Ashland, WI 54806: I don't want to get picky, BUT...

While I like TCR, I have a few main opinions on ways to improve on issues like the current #204.

Your magazine, for the past couple of issues anyway, has been steadily decreasing into a news-and-opinion journal and nothing more. Issues #198-202 were fantastic, with the great articles you ran, but lately it seems you've had an excess of mediocre critical reaction. I've nothing against people airing their opinions, but for the ENTIRE issue (besides the news)????

Honestly, if it wasn't for CAPTAIN KENTUCKY, I'd almost (ALMOST, mind you) consider resubscribing to THE BUYER'S GUIDE--but I'm not THAT disillusioned yet. I've been a Street Enterprises supporter for way too long (starting with MFG #27 as I believe), so I'm hoping some INFORMATIVE articles and interviews (on NON-popular artists--like C.C. Beck, Wayne Boring, George Evans, et al.--there must be plenty of writers and artists from the early days left who'd love to talk about their life and times and thoughts...) These could be liberally illustrated with photos or examples of their work, feature a checklist, or whatever.

How about installing classified ads? I'm sure if you charged around 20-25¢ a.word (a reasonable rate) you'd help pay a lot of bills which you seem to have trouble meeting (according to your letter column).

Consider a replacement for the feature BULLET CROW. This is one of the WORST strips I've ever seen, and even though I've hoped it would get better, it sadly gets worse--I'm not amused or titillated with the prodigious nipples on Bonnie Bunny and I really don't think the art or story warrants the space it takes up. How about a reader poll to oust this offensive and worthless strip?

It's sad so many fine people have passed away this year: William Holden, Russ Manning, Henry Fonda, Ingrid Bergman--and now Harold Foster and Warren Tufts, too. I wonder who will take their places in the future (in terms of quality, that is)?

Weren't you going to publish a schedule of the new fall TV season? How about a "TV-News" section (pertaining to fantasy/science fiction shows)? Or a "Radio Look Out" (HITCHHIKERS' GUIDE TO THE GALAXY was recently re-aired on (at least) Wisconsin Public Radio (as well as TV), and now THE GOON SHOW will be on Saturday nights on Wisconsin Public Radio--finally!!

Thanks for the MAVERICK info. Although I haven't seen the original show for MANY years, I still hold fond memories and enjoy the added dimension you've added with your somewhat obscure background information.

Your coloring has been getting better and better with each issue! (But why no stars on the flag on #204's cover?) And how about some more creative covers than heroes flexing their biceps? Perhaps this might sell your magazine, but it's really boring and innocuous, in my opinion anyway.

I appreciate the columns by Jacob Moraine, Ron Massengill, Jim Korkis and Sam Kujava, and like your new column too, Mike. Whatever happened to your foreign comics information? How about reinstating it along with a review of British, French, German and Australian publications?

P.S. When did CAPTAIN KENTUCKY start in TCR?

[The good Captain began with episode #94 in #196. Which brings me to an apology: we skipped episode #130 (because Don forgot to send it to us) and then Jerry got them out of order and printed #133 before #132! (So when you get this issue, grab the other one and read them all in the correct numerical order if you want to make sense out of the story!) Sorry.

Sorry also that you don't appreciate issues without factual articles; we just didn't have any on hand. At the moment, we have one by Gene Reed, and a very long one by Rick Norwood (which we've waited a few years to find a place for), and not much else. I have one project I've been meaning to do for a long time as well, but I haven't been able to get to it. These kind of things--as well as the interviews you mention, which we'd love to have--are at the mercy of the whims of our contributors, who are also ruled by their time and the desire to see their work in print, since that's all the payment they receive from us.

Comment on BULLET CROW is welcomed, if not necessarily agreed with.

Jerry has done the coloring of the covers since #203, after I'd done it (and pretty well made a mess of things) from #198-202. Why no stars on the flag? Ask Jerry.

The TV schedule was squeezed out of #203, and #204 was too close to the beginning of the season (when the schedule would appear everywhere anyway) to consider it, even if we'd had room (and we didn't). Maybe we'll do one in January for the winter season. MT]

FRANK BRUNNER, Oakland, CA: To those it may concern: An Open Letter from Frank Brunner Re: Doctor Strange/Silver Dagger reprint by Marvel; Original Creators: Brunner and Englehart. "In Case You Were Wondering" Dept.:

[Continued on page 42]

BULLET CROW by CHUCK FIALA

★ ★ ★

FOWL OF FORTUNE

041

SO YOU WANT TO KNOW HOW I ALONE PUT AN END TO W.W.II. OK!..HERE GOES! .. EVERY ACTION-PACKED DETAIL INTACT!
THERE I WAS, SETTING THE WHEELS IN MOTION THAT WOULD LATER TURN ON THE RATZIE MENACE..
.. GROUNDING THEIR EVIL PLANS TO A GRINDING HALT!
MANY OF THE ILL INFORMED SAID, "FLY SMASHER, DON'T SET THOSE WHEELS IN MOTION!
©1982 CHUCK FIALA
"THIS WILL ONLY ACT AS A CATALYST IN FUELING THE RATZIE FIRE!"
GAS
BUT I WAS A CANARY WHO KNEW HOW WHEELS TURNED!
WHEELS AND HOW THEY TURN
I KNEW WHERE AND WHEN TO SET THOSE WHEELS IN MOTION!
AND SET THEM I DID! NEVER ONCE EVEN CONSIDERING THE POSSIBILITY OF PUTTING THE BRAKES ON! IN FACT, I GREASED THOSE BABIES!
..AND THAT IS HOW I ALONE PUT AN END TO WORLD WAR II! "DEATH TO ALL FLIES IN AMERICA!"

CAPTAIN KENTUCKY
EPISODE 130
by Don Rosa
MIDNIGHT AT THE SEELBACH ON THE EVE OF IT'S GRAND OPENING... AND THERE ARE SOME EARLY ARRIVALS IN THE FORM OF SOME LATE GUESTS FROM THE HOTEL'S PAST EIGHT DECADES!
OUT! I WANT ALL OF YOU OUT! I DID NOT INVITE ANY APPARITIONS TO MY GRAND OPENING!
LETS GO, MR DAVIS.. WHILE THESE SPIRITS ARE STILL IN GOOD SPIRITS.
DOWN PLEASE... ULP!
WHEN WE GET TO THE LOBBY, I'LL CHECK THE "OLD SEELBACH BAR"... YOU CALL FOR HELP!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT GOOD CAPTAIN KENTUCKY CAN DO IN THIS SORTA' SITUATION, BUT IT'S MY BEST SHOT.
COAT CHECK
HUH? OH, THANKS
MR DAVIS! WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
BREAKING OUT THE DOMESTIC, OF COURSE! LOOK AT WHAT THOSE THINGS ARE DOING TO MY BEST CHAMPAGNE!
ACME VINEYARDS
A MOMENT OF SILENCE: ON MONDAY, 3/22/82, THE ODOMETER ON MY 1948 DODGE CUSTOM-6 (LICENSE PLATE "COMICS" YOU'VE SEEN ME) HIT 50,000 (ACTUAL) MILES! (20,000 OF WHICH I'VE PUT ON IN THE LAST 3 YEARS.)
CAPTAIN KENTUCKY! AM I GLAD YOU SHOWED UP! WE MUST GET RID OF THESE GATE-CRASHERS BY OPENING TIME!
I... I CAN'T GET A GRIP ON THEM! THEY HAVE NO PHYSICAL SUBSTANCE!
THEY'RE EVERYWHERE! EVEN IN THE "OAK ROOM" RESTAURANT!
I FEAR THIS WILL BE ENOUGH TO PUT SOME OF YOUR GUESTS OFF THEIR MEALS.
OUT! OUT! WE DON'T SERVE CADAVERS HERE!
UH OH! LOOK! THEY'RE WANDERING OUT ONTO 4th AVENUE! THAT'S NOT A HEALTHY PLACE TO BE THIS TIME OF NIGHT. EVEN FOR THEM!
TOO LATE! THEY'RE SPOTTED!
OH, MISS.. YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T BE OUT AND AROUND THIS LATE IN THE--
?
I KNEW THISH WUD HAPPEN WHEN THEY REPEALED THA' FAIR TRADE LAW..
A NOTE TO THE SQUEAMISH: IN CASE YOU'RE DISTURBED BY THOSE LIL' WIGGLY THINGS ON THE CORPSES, IT'S ONLY LINGUINI WHICH I'VE DRAWN IN ANSWER TO THE AGE-OLD QUESTION "IS THERE PASTA AFTER DEATH?.
TO BE CONTINUED...

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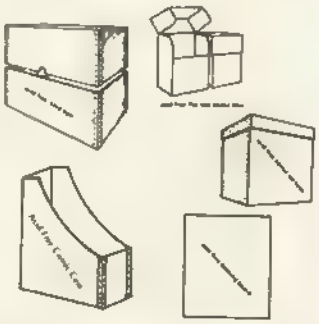

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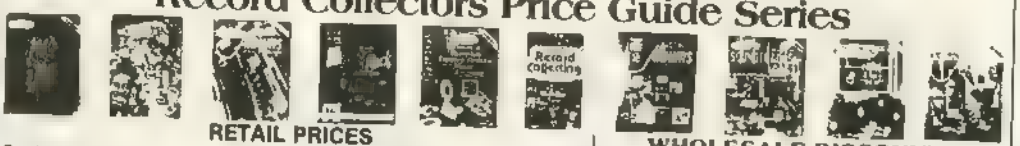

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DC Coming Cor...

ADVENTURE COMICS No. 496, February. "Death Takes a Gamble" is by Bob Rozakis, Alex Toth and Frank Giacoia, and features part four of the origin of the Challengers of the Unknown. Reprints include: the Legion of Super-Heroes in "Supergirl's Greatest Challenge" (ACTION #267) by Jim Mooney, and "Superman's Super-Courtship" (ACTION #289) by Mooney; Aquaman in "Underworld Reward, Part II" (AQUAMAN #45) by Steve Skeates and Jim Aparo; Captain Marvel Jr. in "Mystery of the Missing Newsstand" (SHAZAM! #9) by Elliot Maggin and Dave Cockrum; the Sandman in "Dreams of Doom" (ADVENTURE #77) by Joe Simon and Jack Kirby; and the Spectre in "Menace of the Mystic Mastermind" (SPECTRE #3) by Mike Friedrich and Neal Adams. The front cover is by Gil Kane, the back is by Keith Giffen and Frank Giacoia. [10/12-11/4]

ARAK/SON OF THUNDER No. 18, February. "Death Upon a Horn of Gold" is by Roy and Danette Thomas, Adrian Gonzales and Alfredo Alcala. The trio of Arak, Valda and Satyricus go with the Viking to White Cathay. Plus, Valda appears in the conclusion of the three-parter, "Night on Martyr's Mountain" by Thomas, Thomas, Gonzales and Alcala. Gonzales and Alcala did the cover. [10/12-11/4]

THE BEST OF DC No. 33, February. An all-Legion of Super-Heroes issue, this contains: "The Lone Wolf Legionnaire" (ADVENTURE #327) by Edmond Hamilton and John Forte; "One-Shot Hero" (SUPERBOY #195) by Cary Bates and Dave Cockrum; "Dawnstar Rising" (SUPERBOY AND THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES #240) by Paul Levitz, Paul Kupperberg, Jim Sherman and Bob McLeod; "Brotherly Hate" (SUPERBOY #172) by Nelson Bridwell and George Tuska; "The Living Key" (SUPERBOY #221) by Jim Shooter, Mike Grell and Bob Wiacek; and "The Infinite Man Who Conquered the Legion" by Levitz, Sherman and Wiacek. Keith Giffen and Dan DeCarlo did the cover. [10/12-11/4]

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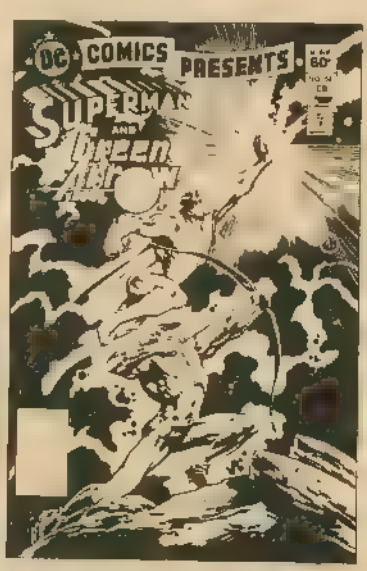


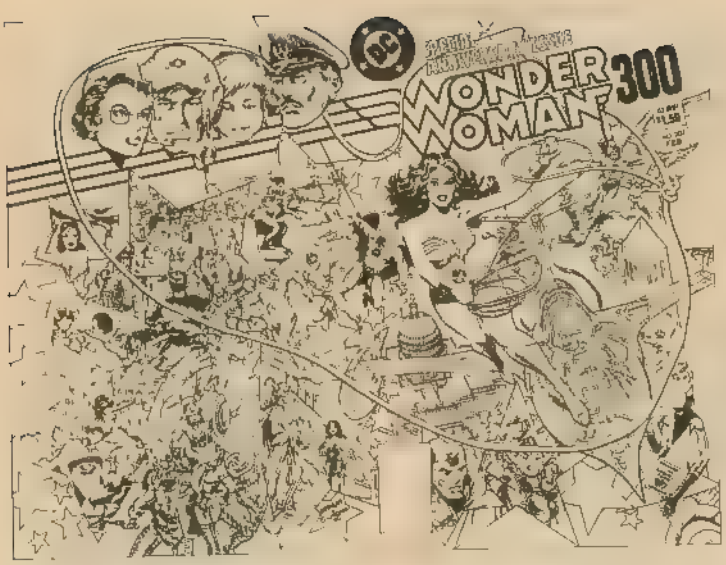
BLACKHAWK No. 255, February. "Command Is a Lonely Vigil" is by Mark Evanier and Dan Spiegle. The Dark Knight must go it alone. Ed Hannigan and Dave Cockrum did the cover. [10/12-11/4]

DC COMICS PRESENTS No. 54, February. "The Price of Progress" is by Paul Kupperberg, Don Newton and Dan Adkins. Smog has covered most of the U.S. and Superman enlists the aid of the Green Arrow (with Black Canary and Jimmy Olsen) to battle the creature responsible. Newton and Dick Giordano did the cover. [10/12-11/4]

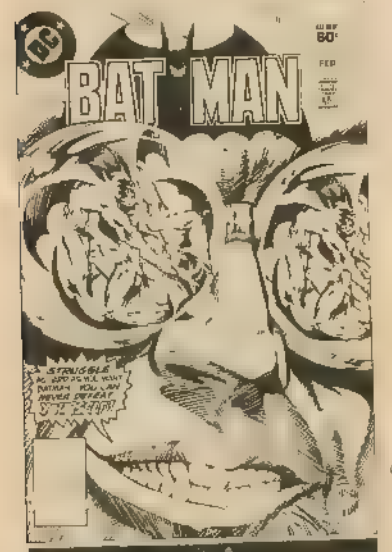
THE FURY OF FIRESTORM No. 9, February. "Baby, the Rain Must Fall!" is by Gerry Conway, Jerome Moore and Rodin Rodriguez. The conclusion of the battle with Typhoon. Pat Broderick and Dick Giordano did the cover. [10/12-11/4]

JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA No. 211, February. "The Devil's Bargain" is by Gerry Conway, Rich Buckler and Romeo Tanghal. The "X" Factor has been stolen from Earth, and the JLA is chasing the aliens who did it, the Treasurers. Buckler and Dick Giordano did the cover. [10/12-11/4]

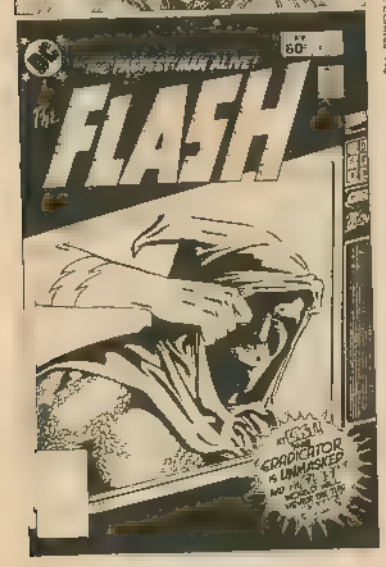
WONDER WOMAN No. 300, February. "Beautiful Dreamer, Death Unto Thee" is by (breath) Roy Thomas, Gene Colan, Keith Giffen, Jan Duursema, Dick Giordano, Ross Andru, Rich Buckler and Keith Pollard. Wonder Woman accepts Steve Trevor's proposal of marriage at last, in a story which features the JLA, New Teen Titans, Earth-Two's WW and Earth-One's Sandman, who's at the base of the dreaming mentioned in the title. Ed Hannigan and Dick Giordano did the cover. [10/12-11/4]

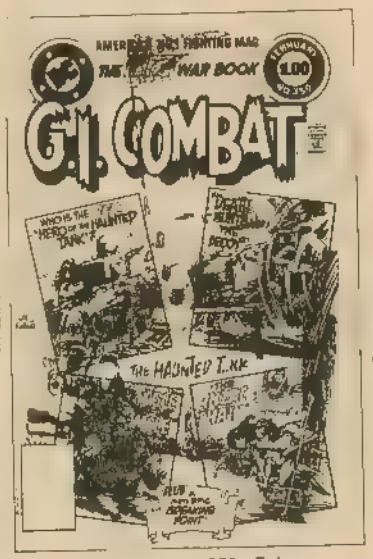


BATMAN No. 356, February. "The Double Life of Hugo Strange" is by Gerry Conway, Don Newton and Dick Giordano. It's Batman vs. Batman in a story which finally concludes the Hugo Strange mystery. Ed Hannigan and Giordano did the cover. [10/19-11/11]



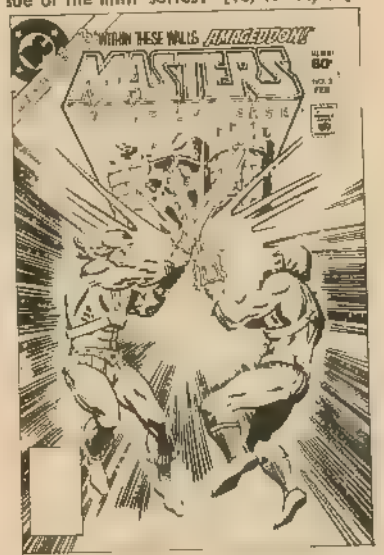
THE FLASH No. 318, February. "The Killer Who Wiped Central City Clean" is by Cary Bates, Carmine Infantino and Dennis Jensen. The struggle with the Eradicator continues. Then, the new back-up series starring the Creeper begins with "New Hopes, New Fears" by Carl Gafford and Dave Gibbons. The Creeper fears that the act he's been putting on for so long is no longer an act--he's going bananas. Infantino and Rodin Rodriguez did the cover. [10/19-11/11]





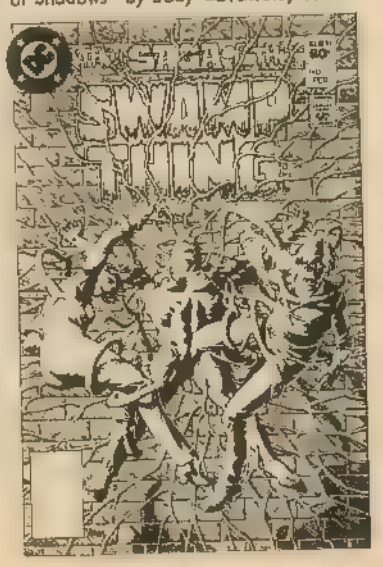
G.I. COMBAT No. 250, February. The Haunted Tank's tales are "Hero of Haunted Tank" and "Death Haunts the Decoy," both by Robert Kanigher and Sam Glanzman. The Eagle stars in "The Eagle and the Mole" by Kanigher and E.R. Cruz; other stories are "The Anzac Chain" by Kanigher and Ernie Patricio; and "Breaking Point" by George Kashdan and Dick Ayers. Joe Kubert did the cover. [10/19-11/11]

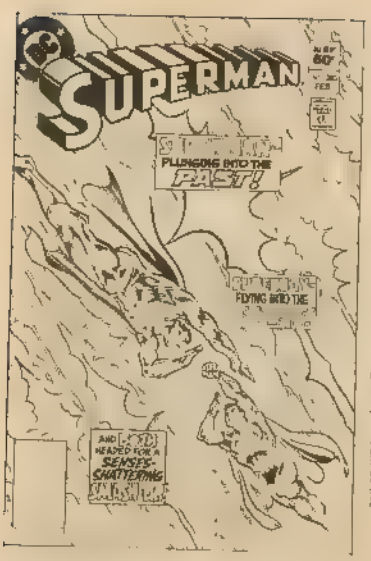
MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE No. 3, February. "Within These Walls--Armageddon" is by Paul Kupperberg, George Tuska and Rodin Rodriguez. He-Man and Co. have their final showdown with Skeletor in Castle Grayskull. Final issue of the mini-series. [10/19-11/11]



THE NEW TEEN TITANS No. 28, February. "Terra in the Night" is by Marv Wolfman, George Perez and Romeo Tanghal. The New Teen Titans encounter Terra--but don't know if she's friend or foe. Perez did the cover. [10/19-11/11]

THE SAGA OF THE SWAMP THING No. 10, February. "Number of the Beast" is by Martin Pasko and Tom Yeates. A four-parter starts with Swamp Thing and company in Germany investigating Karen Glancy, a psychic. The mysteries of the past nine issues will be resolved in this storyline. Also, the Phantom Stranger appears in "Sanctuary of Shadows" by Joey Cavalieri, Fred





Carrillo and Totleben. Yeates did the cover. [10/19-11/11]

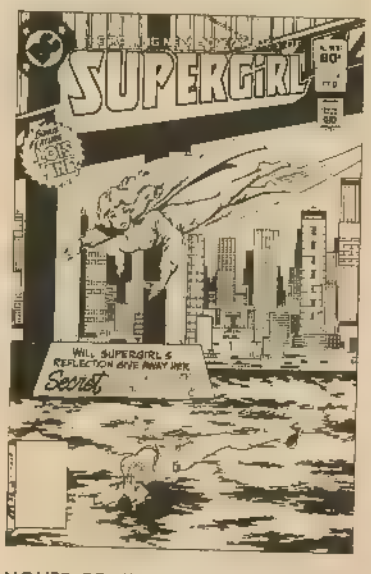
SUPERMAN No. 380, February. "A Mind-Switch in Time" is by Cary Bates, Curt Swan and Dave Hunt. In a three-parter that crosses over to SUPERBOY #38, Superman and Superboy cross in the time stream and somehow exchange minds. The full-grown Superman now has the mind and memories of his teen-age self, and vice versa. Ross Andru and Dick Giordano did the cover. [10/19-11/11]

THE BRAVE AND THE BOLD No. 195, February. "Night of Blood" is by Mike Barr and Jim Aparo. Andrew Bennett of I, VAMPIRE guest-stars and it's Batman vs. the Bat. Aparo did the cover. [10/26-11/18]

*CAMELOT 3000 No. 3, February. "Knight Quest is by Mike Barr, Brian Bolland and Bruce Patterson. More cast members are introed and the enemy in the United Nations is revealed. Bolland did the cover. [10/26-11/18]

THE DARING NEW ADVENTURES OF SUPERGIRL No. 4, February. "Hail, Hail the Gang's All Here" is by Paul Kupperberg, Carmine Infantino and Bob Oksner. Supergirl's reflection is showing her in her civilian guise for some reason. Also, Lois Lane appears in "Missy Doesn't Live Here Anymore" by Tamsyn O'Flynn and Oksner. [10/26-11/18]

GREEN LANTERN No. 161, February. "...And they Shall Crush the Headmen" is by Mike Barr, Keith Pollard and Pablo Marcos. GL and the Omega Men take on the Headmen. Tales of the Green Lantern Corps features "Stormbrother" by Robin Snyder and Dave Gibbons. Pollard and Mike DeCarlo did the cover. [10/26-11/18]



HOUSE OF MYSTERY No. 313, February. I, VAMPIRE story is "Side Effects" by Dan Mishkin, Gary Cohn, Adrian Gonzales and Tom Sutton. Also: "I,

Baby Vampire" by Steve DeStefano; "Germ of Greed" by George Kashdan, Carmine Infantino and Sal Trapani; and "Food For Thought" by Steve Skeates and Rodin Rodriguez. Michael Kaluta did the cover. [10/26-11/18]

THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES No. 296, February. "What Do You Do On The Day After Doomsday?" is by Paul Levitz, Keith Giffen and Larry Mahlstedt. Recovery after the Great Darkness series. Giffen and Mahlstedt did the cover. [10/26-11/18]

THE NIGHT FORCE No. 7, February. "The Apocalypse" is by Marv Wolfman, Gene Colan and Bob Smith. The final chapter of the first "book." Colan and Dick Giordano did the cover. [10/26-11/18]

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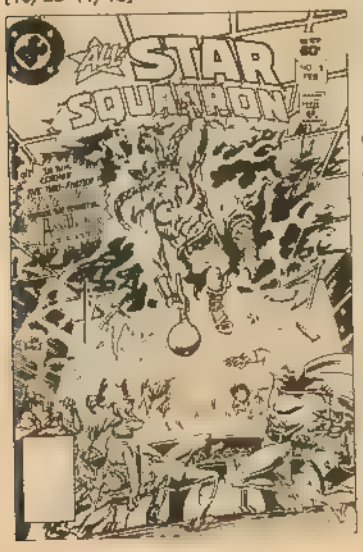
SGT. ROCK No. 373, February. "Burning Soldier" is by Robert Kanigher, Trebuk and Frank Redondo. Also included are "Land of the Vikings" and "Autumn Breeze" by students of the Kubert school. Joe Kubert did the cover. [10/26-11/18]

WARLORD No. 66, February. "Wizardwar" is by Mike Grell, Dan Jurgens and Mike DeCarlo. Travis and friends invade Great Fire Mountain to tackle the Evil One. Grell did the cover. [10/26-11/18]



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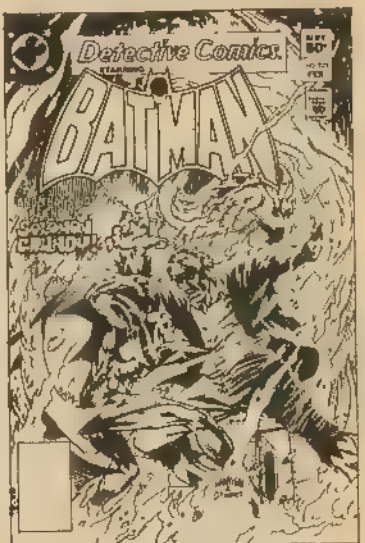
ACTION COMICS No. 540, February. "World Enough and Time" is by Marv Wolfman, Mike Barr and Gil Kane. An old time master appears to aid Superman in his effort to go into the past to tackle Satanis. The penultimate Aquaman story, "Water-War One" is by Bob Rozakis, Alex Saviuk and Frank McLaughlin. Kane did the cover. [11/2-11/24]

ALL-STAR SQUADRON No. 18, February. "Vengeance From Valhalla" is by Roy Thomas, Adrian Gonzales and Rick Haberg. Tarantula and Sandman are two new members of the cast as the former faces the latter's former foe (from a 1941 adventure) Thor, the God of Thunder. Joe Kubert did the cover. [11/2-11/24]



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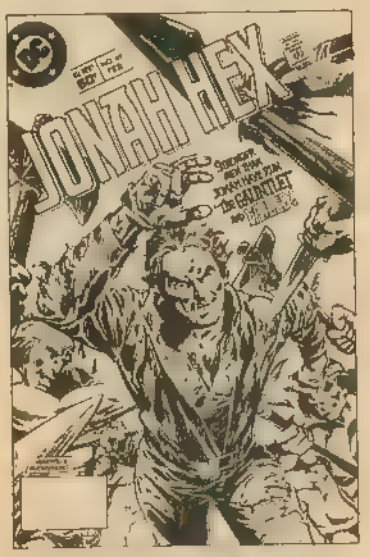
ARION, LORD OF ATLANTIS No. 4, February. "Unto Atlantis, a Savior" is by Doug Moench and Jan Duursema. This is a special origin issue. Duursema did the cover. [11/2-11/24]

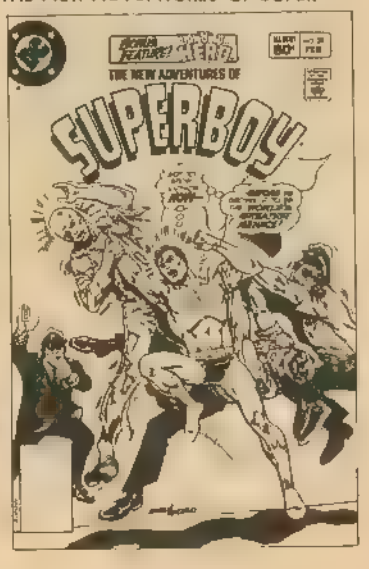
CAPTAIN CARROT AND HIS AMAZING ZOO CREW! No. 12, February. "Of Mice and Menace" is by Scott Shaw! and Al Gordon. Presenting a new member of the crew: the size-changing mouse Little Cheese, who battles the villainous Fat Cat. Shaw! did the cover. [11/2-11/24]



DETECTIVE COMICS No. 523, February. "Inferno" is by Gerry Conway and Tony DeZuniga. It's Batman vs. Solomon Grundy, back on Earth-One once again. Also, the Green Arrow stars in "Mob Rule" by Joey Cavalieri, Irv Novick and Ron Randall. Ed Hannigan and Dick Giordano did the cover. [11/2-11/24]

JONAH HEX No. 69, February. "The Gauntlet" is by Michael Fleisher, Dick Ayers and Tony DeZuniga. To face Claw, Jonah must endure the painful gauntlet run by Claw's tribesmen. Ross Andru and Dick Giordano did the cover. [11/2-11/24]

THE NEW ADVENTURES OF SUPER-



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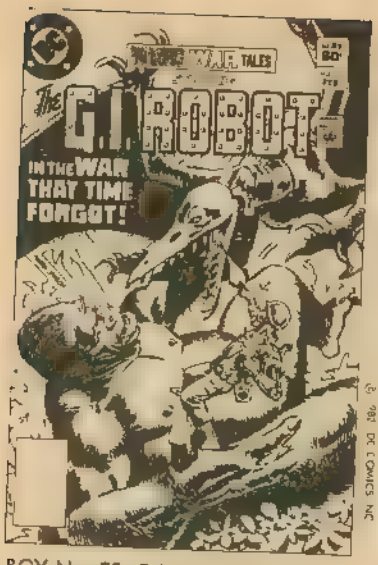
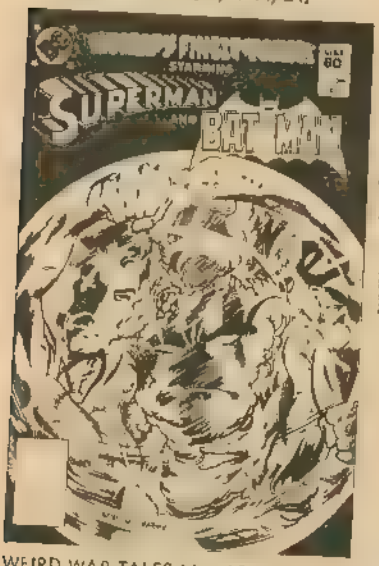


BOY No. 38, February. "The Day That Lasted Forever" is by Paul Kupperberg, Kurt Schaffenberger and Dan Adkins. In his teen-aged body, Superman sees a lot of good that could be done if he did some preventive tinkering with his history. Dial "H" For Hero is represented by "Gone With What Wind?" by Nelson Bridwell, Bob Rozakis, Howard Bender and Joe Giella. Ross Andru and Mike DeCarlo did the cover. [11/2-11/24]



WEIRD WAR TALES No. 120, February. The G.I. Robot enters the War That Time Forgot in "The Monster Was a Lady" by Robert Kanigher and Fred Carrillo. The back-up is "A Balance of Souls" by Wyatt Gwyon and Jess Jodloman. Ross Andru and Klaus Janson did the cover. [11/2-11/24]

WORLD'S FINEST COMICS No. 288, February. "To Hell and Back" is by Mike Barr, Marv Wolfman and Adrian Gonzales. Madame Zodiac is at work with more occult chaos with the aid of Dr. Zodiac. Ed Hannigan and Dick Giordano did the cover. [11/2-11/24]

Marvel Coming

*ROBERT E. HOWARD'S CONAN THE BARBARIAN No. 1, 1983. "Red Nails" and "The Lurker From The Catacombs" are by Roy Thomas and Barry Smith from SAVAGE TALES #2 and 3, here being reprinted in color on white paper in this $2.50 special. Also, "Cimmeria" a poem by Robert E. Howard, illustrated by Smith, from SAVAGE TALES #2. The cover is by Smith from CONAN #21, the back cover by Smith is from CONAN SPECIAL #1. [9/21-10/12]

DAREDEVIL No. 191, February. "Roulette" is by Frank Miller (story-pencils) and Terry Austin. Sitting at the bedside of a paralyzed Bullseye, DD reminiscences and plays Russian Roulette. Miller did the cover. [10/5-10/26]

DAZZLER No. 24, February. "A Rogue In The House" is by Danny Fingeroth, Frank Springer and Vince Colletta. Rogue continues to attack the Dazzler in her attempt to get to Angel, and Power Man and Iron Fist are there on Alison Blaire's side. Springer also did the cover. [10/5-10/26]

*KA-ZAR THE SAVAGE No. 23, February. "Resurrection!" is by Bruce Jones, Bob Hall and Armando Gil. Ka-Zar finds out he isn't dead, but still in a lot of trouble, as he discovers who Ramona is working with. The Tales of Zabu back-up is "Good-Bye Forever" by Jones and Val Mayerik. The cover is by Gil. [10/5-10/26]

MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE No. 96, February. "Visiting Hours!" is by Tom DeFalco, Ron Wilson and Mike Esposito. Exhausted from the beating he's gotten in the MTIO ANNUAL and FF recently, Ben is in the hospital where an assemblage of his enemies and many

of his friends battle. More guest stars than you can imagine. Wilson and Frank Giacoia did the cover. [10/5-10/26]

RED SONJA No. 1, February. "The Blood That Binds!" is by Christie Marx, Roy Thomas, Tony DeZuniga, Ernie Colon, Alan Kupperberg and Mel Candido. With her new outfit and a red-haired friend, Sonja starts a four issue series of adventures. Cover by John Buscema. [10/5-10/26]

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SPIDER-WOMAN No. 48, February. "Original Sin!" is by Ann Nocenti, Brian Postman and Sam DeLa Rosa. As Jessica battles Gypsy Moth and her followers, Jack Russell briefly appears. Postman and Brett Breeding did the cover. [10/5-10/26]

TEAM AMERICA No. 9, February. "Choices" is by Jim Shooter, Bill Mantlo, Mark Bright and Vince Colletta. The Marauder's bike is all that keeps TA on the racing circuit until Stark International offers the group a

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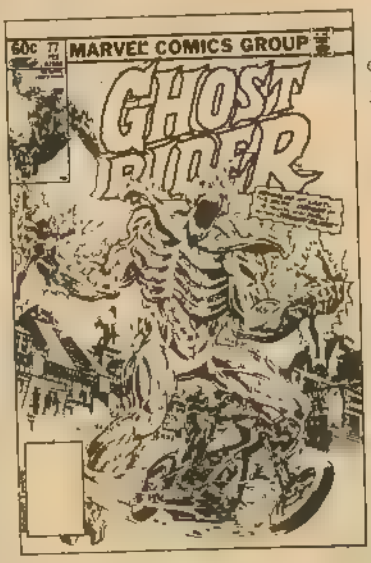
place in the organization. Ed Hannigan and Colletta did the cover. [10/5-10/26]

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN No. 237, February. "The High and the Mighty" is by Roger Stern, Bob Hall and Frank Giacoia. DD's old foe gets back his Stilt Man outfit and goes on a rampage. The cover is by Ed Hannigan and Joe Rubinstein. [10/12-11/2]



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CAPTAIN AMERICA No. 278, February. "Oh, Thus Be It Ever" is by J. Marc De Matteis, Mike Zeck and John Beatty. Steve Rogers' oldest friend's life is at stake as he battles Arnim Zola and the Son of Zemo. Plus there is a Falcon back-up by De Matteis, Zeck and Beatty. Zeck and Beatty also did the cover. [10/12-11/2]

DOCTOR STRANGE No. 57, February. "Gather My Disciples Before Me" is by Roger Stern, Kevin Nowlan and Terry Austin. The Doc looks for a new assistant to whom he can pass on the skills of sorcery. The cover is by Nowlan. [10/12-11/2]

GHOST RIDER No. 77, February. "Unleashed?" is by J. Marc DeMatteis, Bob Budiansky and Kevin Dzuban. We learn the origin of Zarathos, the demon in Johnny Blaze, as the Freakmaster and his minions attack once more. Budiansky and Dave Simons did the cover. [10/12-11/2]

*MICRONAUTS No. 50, February. "Sometimes The Good Guys Lose" is by Bill Mantlo, Butch Guice and Danny Bulanadi. This special clash between the wee warriors and their old enemy will see the death of several Micronauts. The cover is also by Guice. [10/12-11/2]

*MOON KNIGHT No. 28, February. "Passing Strangers" is by Steve Grant, Joe Brozowski and Vince Colletta. MK battles a desert foe. Bill Sienkiewicz did the cover. [10/12-11/2]

THE NEW ADVENTURES OF INDIANA JONES No. 2, February. Indy keeps

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after the Ikons of Ikamani, in a story by Denny O'Neil, John Byrne and Terry Austin. The cover is also by Austin. [10/12-11/2]

SMURFS No. 1, December.
SMURFS No. 2, January.
SMURFS No. 3, February. Three issues of the famous Europeans characters, in all of their blue cuteness. Each has multi- and single page stories signed Peyo, but some are by Marie Severin and Dan DeCarlo. [10/12-11/2] (That was the announced shipping and on

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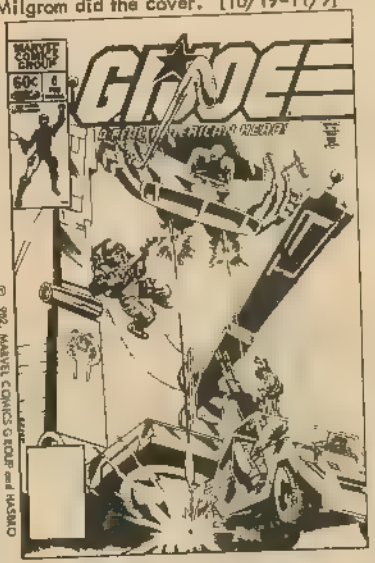
sale dates -- the books came out a lot sooner and the newsstand copies came out in September, October and November.)

THOR No. 328, February. "Violence In Video" is by Doug Moench, Alan Kupperberg and Vince Colletta. Sif battles high technology when she faces Megatak. Kupperberg and Colletta did the cover. [10/12-11/2]

*X-MEN SPECIAL EDITION No. 1, February. "Second Genesis," the

origin of the new X-Men, by Len Wein, Chris Claremont, Dave Cockrum and Peter Iro, is reprinted on white paper from GIANT-SIZE X-MEN #1. There is also "Secrets of the New X-Men" by Claremont and Cockrum, about the characters. The wraparound cover is by Dave Cockrum. [10/12-11/2]

THE AVENGERS No. 228, February. "Trial And Error" is by Roger Stern, Al Milgrom and Brett Breeding. As Henry Pym goes on trial, the Masters of Evil intrude upon the solemnity of the court. Milgrom did the cover. [10/19-11/9]



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CONAN THE BARBARIAN No. 143, February. "Life Among The Dead" is by Bruce Jones, John Buscema and Ricardo Villamonte. Conan's new sword is magic -- but it attracts trouble and there is a dragon involved in the enchantment. Buscema did the cover. [10/19-11/9]

G. I. JOE, A REAL AMERICAN HERO No. 8, February. Story by Herb Trimpe (script and art). The gang go to Florida to guard a satellite launch that Cobra wants to keep grounded. Mike Vosburg and Jack Abel did the cover. [10/19-11/9]

THE INCREDIBLE HULK No. 280, February. "Alone In A Crowd" is by Bill Mantlo, Sal Buscema and Andy Mushynsky. While trying to cope with all the publicity that follows his presidential pardon, the Hulk is attacked by the Leader and his humanoid horde. Steve Leialoha did the cover. [10/19-11/9]

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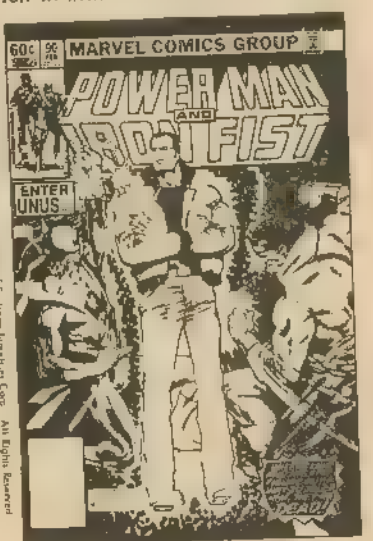
MARVEL TALES STARRING SPIDER-MAN No. 148, February. "Turning Point" by Stan Lee and Steve Ditko is reprinted from the classic pages of AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #11. The cover is a mirror-reversed version of the original by Steve Ditko. [10/19-11/9]

POWER MAN AND IRON FIST No. 90, February. "Enter Unus..." is by Denny O'Neil, Denys Cowan and Mel Candido. Our salt and pepper team have a serious run-in with one of the X-Men's oldest



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foes. Cowan and Bill Sienkiewicz did the cover. [10/19-11/9]

ROM No. 39, February. "Deathrise" is by Bill Mantlo, Sal Buscema, Ian Akin and Brian Garvey. Shang-Chi teams up with the Metal Marvel to battle Dire Wraiths and an Egyptian Princess. The late Gene Day did the cover. [10/19-11/9]

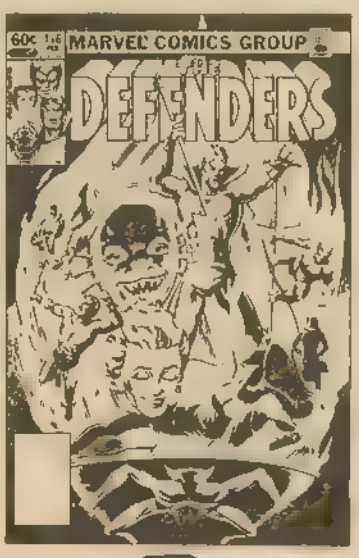
THE UNCANNY X-MEN No. 166, February. "Live Free Or Die" is a special double issue by Chris Claremont, Paul Smith and Bob Wiacek. This story concludes the group's clash with the Brood. The cover is by Smith. [10/19-11/9]

THE VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH No. 4, February. "Pleased To Meet You, Hoped You Guessed My Name" is by Bill Mantlo, Ric Leonardi, Ian Akin and Brian Garvey. Wanda and Pietro are told of their true origin by Magneto as their surrogate mother, Bova, comes back to them. The final issue of this limited series. Leonardi and Joe Rubinstein did the cover. [10/19-11/9]

MARVEL PAPERBACK No. 13. "Dark Crystal" is adapted from the movie by David Kraft, Bret Blevins, Vince Colletta and Rick Bryant. The Jim Henson film fantasy comes to comics, and will be appearing in a MARVEL SUPER SPECIAL next month. The cover painting is by Blevins. [10/25-11/5]

MARVEL PAPERBACK No. 14. "Trapped By The Fellowship Of Fear" and "The Stiltman Cometh" are two Daredevil classics by Stan Lee and Wally Wood that make up this reprint book. The cover we have no credit for. [10/25-11/15]

DEFENDERS No. 116, February. "Two By Two" is by J. Marc De Matteis, Don Perlin and Steve Mitchell. With their return to Earth, the group breaks down to a number of duos (Patty and Damien, Namor and Valkyrie, Vera and the Beast, Isaac and Dolly) that try to

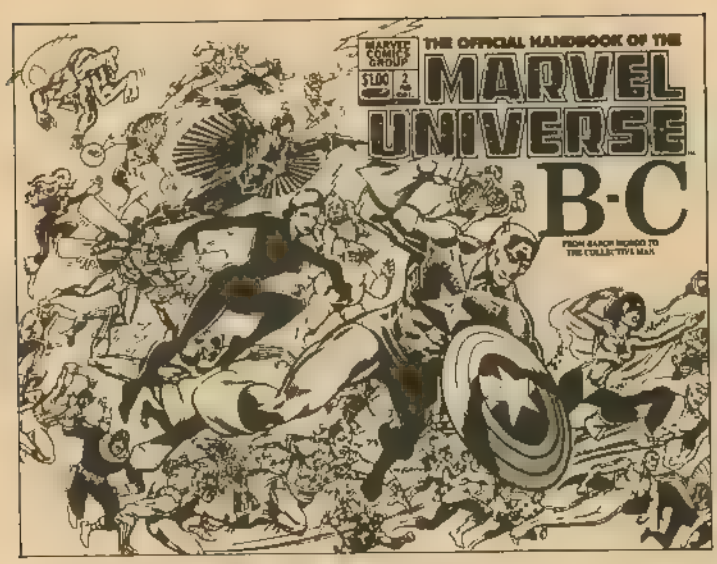


examine their relationships. Perlin and Mitchell did the cover. [10/26-11/16]

FANTASTIC FOUR No. 251, February. "Into The Negative Zone" is by John Byrne. A new storyline begins with the return of an unexpected villain. Cover by Byrne. [10/26-11/16]

IRON MAN No. 167, February. "The Empty Shell" is by Denny O'Neil, Luke McDonnell and Steve Mitchell. Weakened by his fall off the wagon, Tony is under attack by Obadiah Stane and all of the Chessmen. McDonnell and Mitchell did the cover. [10/26-11/16]

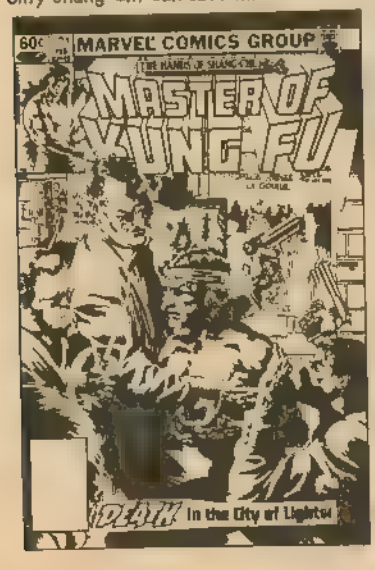
MARVEL TEAM-UP No. 126, February. "The Obligation" is by Jim Shooter and Tomoyuki Takenaka. Spidey and the Hulk do battle... over a five dollar bill? Plus a second story, "A Firm Offer" by J. Marc De Matteis, Bob Hall and Mike Esposito. Luke Cage and the Son of Satan fight the Sons of Satanish, from the pages of the DEFENDERS. John Romita Jr. and Dan Green did the cover. [10/26-11/16]



Armando Gil did the cover. [10/26-11/16]

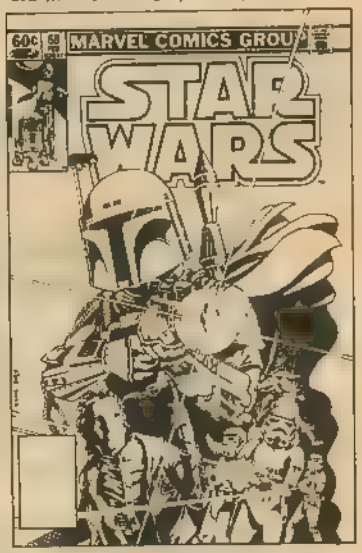
*THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE No. 2, February. The Alphabetical object of this issue is "B-C," but you won't find one mention of Johnny Hart's caveman comic-strip character. You will find Marvel heroes and villains of that designation with pin-ups by John Byrne, Bob Layton, Frank Miller, Mike Zeck, Joe Rubinstein and others. Ed Hannigan and Rubinstein did the cover, which continues from the first issue's. [10/26-11/16]

MASTER OF KUNG FU No. 121, February. "The Mad House Effect" is by Doug Moench and Gene Day. Given a hallucinatory drug by a renegade MI-6 agent, Clive Reston is in a danger that only Shang-Chi can save him from.



PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN No. 75, February. "Ferae Naturae" is by Bill Mantlo, Al Milgrom and Jim Mooney. In this double-sized special issue, the war between the Owl and Doc Ock peaks, with Spidey and the Black Cat caught in the middle. Milgrom did the cover. [10/26-11/16]

STAR WARS No. 68, February. "The Search Begins" is by David Michelinie, Gene Day and Tom Palmer. Given a vital clue about the whereabouts of the carbon-frozen Han Solo, Princess Leia sets off after Boba Fett. Day also did the cover. [10/26-11/16]



*WARLOCK No. 3, February. This white paper reprint special contains "How Strange My Destiny" (parts one and two) and "A Trollish Tale" by Jim Starlin and Steve Leialoha, from the original WARLOCK #10, 11 and 12. Starlin did the cover. [10/26-11/16]

WHAT IF? No. 37, February. A Transformation issue. "What If The Silver Surfer Were Transformed Back To Normal?" is by Dave Kraft, Mike Vosburg and Steve Mitchell. "What If The Beast Were More Bestial?" is by Alan Weiss and Mark Gruenwald. "What If The Thing Continued To Mutate From Virus X?" is by Tom DeFalco, Arvell Jones and Sam DeLa Rosa. The cover is by Ed Hannigan and Joe Rubinstein. [10/26-11/16]

Right now, TBG subscribers are reading the news you'll be reading everywhere else a month from now.

Our fast weekly schedule has advantages, and this is one of them! Cat Yronwode brings you the news before any other publication in **Fit To Print**, along with insightful commentary on all areas of interest to comics fans.

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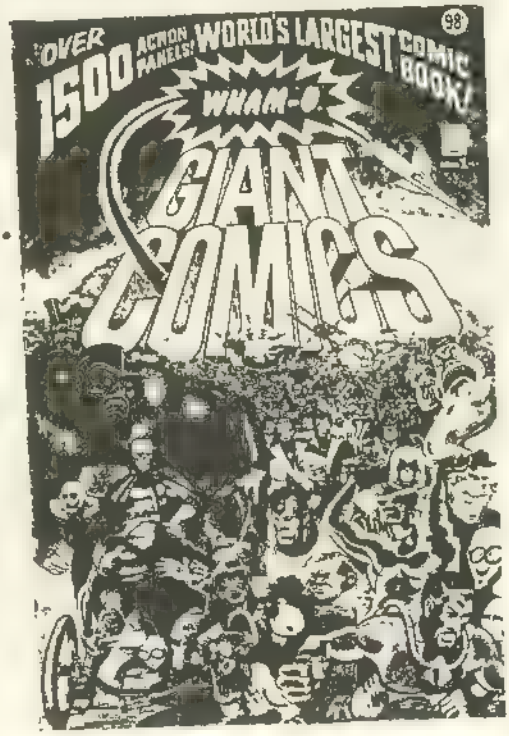

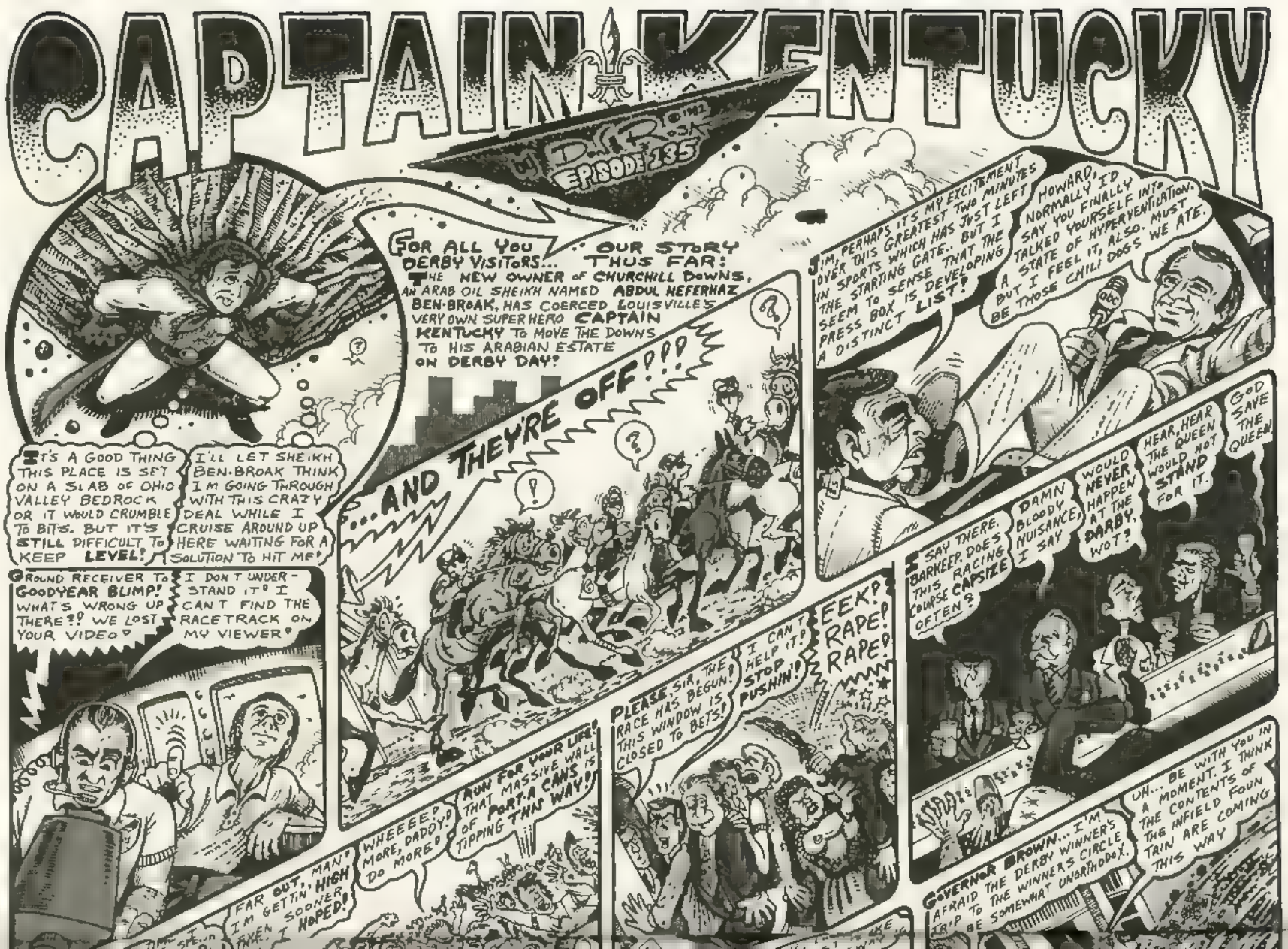
CAPTAIN KENTUCKY
by D.W. Reed ©1982
EPISODE 235
FOR ALL YOU DERBY VISITORS... OUR STORY THUS FAR: THE NEW OWNER OF CHURCHILL DOWNS, AN ARAB OIL SHEIKH NAMED ABDUL NEFERHAZ BEN-BROAK, HAS COERCED LOUISVILLE'S VERY OWN SUPER HERO CAPTAIN KENTUCKY TO MOVE THE DOWNS TO HIS ARABIAN ESTATE ON DERBY DAY!
IT'S A GOOD THING THIS PLACE IS SET ON A SLAB OF OHIO VALLEY BEDROCK OR IT WOULD CRUMBLE TO BITS. BUT IT'S STILL DIFFICULT TO KEEP LEVEL!
I'LL LET SHEIKH BEN-BROAK THINK I'M GOING THROUGH WITH THIS CRAZY DEAL WHILE I CRUISE AROUND UP HERE WAITING FOR A SOLUTION TO HIT ME!
...AND THEY'RE OFF!!!
GROUND RECEIVER TO GOODYEAR BLIMP! WHAT'S WRONG UP THERE?! WE LOST YOUR VIDEO!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT! I CAN'T FIND THE RACETRACK ON MY VIEWER!
FAR OUT, MAN! I'M GETTIN' HIGH FASTER THAN I HOPED!
WHEEEEE! MORE, DADDY! DO MORE!
RUN FOR YOUR LIFE! THAT MASSIVE WALL OF PORT-A-CANS IS TIPPING THIS WAY!
PLEASE, SIR, THE RACE HAS BEGUN! THIS WINDOW IS CLOSED TO BETS!
I CAN'T HELP IT! STOP PUSHIN'!
EEK! RAPE! RAPE!
JIM, PERHAPS IT'S MY EXCITEMENT OVER THIS GREATEST TWO MINUTES IN SPORTS WHICH HAS JUST LEFT THE STARTING GATE.. BUT I SEEM TO SENSE THAT THE PRESS BOX IS DEVELOPING A DISTINCT LIST!
HOWARD, NORMALLY I'D SAY YOU FINALLY TALKED YOURSELF INTO A STATE OF HYPERVENTILATION. BUT I FEEL IT, ALSO. MUST BE THOSE CHILI DOGS WE ATE.
I SAY THERE, BARKEEP. DOES THIS COURSE CAPSIZE OFTEN?
DAMN BLOODY NUISANCE, I SAY
WOULD NEVER HAPPEN AT THE DARBY, WOT?
HEAR, HEAR THE QUEEN WOULD NOT STAND FOR IT.
GOD SAVE THE QUEEN
GOVERNOR BROWN... I'M AFRAID THE DERBY WINNER'S TRIP TO THE WINNER'S CIRCLE MAY BE SOMEWHAT UNORTHODOX.
UH... BE WITH YOU IN A MOMENT. I THINK THE CONTENTS OF THE INFIELD FOUNTAIN ARE COMING THIS WAY

PHHHT!
Good!
NOW!
THERE GOES THE WINNER & CHAMP!
Don't feel bad, Lois! The meet is short!
I've been on the fast tracks but tracks!
¡Que pasa! These muy tracks! Race track! No way! Crazee! I kind headway!
No
I'm rendered aphonic! I'm rendered inarticulate! Words fail me! Dumbfounded! Breathless! Tied! C. Struck! Tongue tied! Speechless! Stricken! Unable to speak! Lacaw! Unable!
Howard the Horse! Begin the last gallop! The starting gate! Whir!
I'm struck dumb! I'm struck mute! Voiceless! Wordless! Speechless! Mute!
The horses are all backwards! The silence! Have they no voice for mute! Do you think? Do you? Do you? Do you

Captain Kentucky
episode 136 by Don Rosa ©1982
ENJOY DERBY DAY? WELL, GOOD NEWS! IN "CAPTAIN KENTUCKY," IN KEEPING WITH ITS FAME AS A PROGRESSIVE, TOPICAL, UP-TO-THE-SECOND COMIC STRIP, IT'S STILL DERBY DAY! HOOHAH!
I KNOW HOW TO DISCOURAGE SHEIKH BIN-BROAK FROM MAKING ME TAKE CHURCHILL DOWNS TO SAUDI-ARABIA? THE TRACK WILL BE SAFE ON THAT HORSE FARM ON DUTCHMAN'S LANE..
..WHILE I SPEED ACROSS TO MY HOME IN THE "BIG SPRING" SUBDIVISION FOR A SECRET "WEAPON".
CLEO! YOU CAN FINISH CHEWING UP MY UNDERWEAR LATER. RIGHT NOW I HAVE A JOB FOR YOU.
HAH?
DRINK THIS "OCTA-HEXA-GLOP". I BET YOU'D LIKE TO BECOME SUPER POWERED AGAIN, WOULDN'T YOU?
WOW! YOU'RE HUMAN-GONE RIGHT I WOULD?
SHORTLY...
CAPTAIN KENTUCKY! WHY ARE YOU STOP MOVING MY RACING TRACK TO ARABIA? YOU WILL PROCEED.
BUT, SHEIKH, I THOUGHT YOU'D WANT TO CANCEL THE SALE DUE TO YOUR MOSLEM FAITH.
Zip
OH, NO, I ALREADY THOUGHT OF THIS. THOUGH THE HORSES WILL BE FACING AWAY FROM MECCA FOR HALF THE TIME, I WILL POSITION IT SO THAT THEY WILL FACE MECCA ON THE HOME STRETCH.
NO, NO... I'M REFERRING TO THIS OTHER MATTER-- CHURCHILL DOWNS COMES WITH CAPTAIN CLEO AS PART OF THE DEAL.
ZOOM
AAAIIIEEE! A DOG? A SUPER DOG! GETTING IT OFF ME! UNCLEAN!!! UNCLEAN!!!
I MEAN, HOW WOULD THIS GO OVER BACK IN ARABIA IF MOSLEMS CAN'T TOLERATE THE TOUCH OF A DOG? AND CLEO IS A MIGHTY AFFECTIONATE POOCH!
SLURP!
AND A SUPER DOG IS INDESTRUCTIBLE, EH? YOU WIN INFIDEL! I WILL SELL CHURCHILL DOWNS BACK TO LYNN STONE!
AND, OF COURSE, LOUISVILLE KEEPS THE FEE I EARNED FOR ARRANGING THE ORIGINAL SALE.
YOU ARE NOT HEARING THE LAST OF ME, CAMEL-CHIP BREATH!
GOOD GIRL, CLEO. I'LL LET YOU DIG THREE HOLES IN THE BACK YARD FOR THIS.
WHAT'S THE DEAL? DO I NEED DOGGY DEODORANT, OR WHAT?
BUT... WHAT ABOUT ALL THE DERBY-GOERS STILL UP AT THE TRACK?
HOW DO WE GET DOWN FROM HERE?
TAXI!
I THINK I SAW A HORSE EARLIER!
HEY WHERE'S MY WALLET?!
LOOK-- JUMP OVER TO THE ROOF OF THE LINCOLN INCOME LIFE BUILDING?
TAXI!
DING DING DING
???
MUST BE ONE HELL OF AN OFFICE PARTY UPSTAIRS.
NEXT WEEK: A NEW STORY... THAT I'LL THINK UP SOMETIME THIS WEEK.

discovers why he is different from other people on Earth. Until SUPERMAN #161, Superman had always assumed he was an Earthman, but never understood why he was so powerful. Anyway, this is a classic issue in funny-book history which is regrettably ignored by historians and thankfully ignored by "price-guides."

A very interesting query I received was concerning comics with comic pros in the stories. Ed Zarger and Paul Balze both sent in partial lists (indicating people with a "z" in their last name keep track of this sort of thing)... here is a list of the comics which other readers may wish to add to:

AMAZING ADVENTURES #16 (Englehart, Wein, Wein and Conway)

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #169 (Stan Lee)

THE BRAVE AND THE BOLD #124 (Haney, Aparo)

DAREDEVIL #79 (Stan and wife)

DETECTIVE COMICS #347 (Gardner Fox), 482 (Rozakis, Golden, Milgrom, Levitz, Oda)

THE DOOM PATROL #121 (Boltinoff, Premiani)

FANTASTIC FOUR #10 (Stan and Jack), 176 (already mentioned) and ANNUAL #3 (Lee and Kirby)

FOUR-STAR SPECTACULAR #6 (a reprint; Wonder Woman creators Dr. William "Charles Moulton" Marston and Harry G. Peter...can you wonder why Harry liked to use his middle initial?)

THE FLASH #123 (Fox), 179 (Schwartz), 228 (Bates)

GHOST RIDER #14, 15, 17-19 (Richard and Wendy Pini)

IRON MAN #72 (a comic con)

JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA #123-124 (Bates, Maggin, Schwartz and Infantino), 153 (Schwartz)

MAN-THING #22 (Gerber); V2 #11 (Claremont, et al.)

MARVEL FEATURE #2 (Roy Thomas)

MICRONAUTS #39 (Bill Mantlo)

THE NEW TEEN TITANS #20 (Wolfman, Perez and Tanghal)

NOVA #5 (a comic con)

THOR #207 (Englehart, Conway, Wein and Wein)

WEREWOLF BY NIGHT #9 (the Weins)

WHAT IF? #11 (Marvel Bullpen)

WONDER WOMAN #220 (Schwartz, Giordano)

X-MEN #98 (Stan, Jack, Chris and Bonnie)

Other issues whose numbers still elude us are a BATMAN with John Broome, a HOUSE OF MYSTERY with Jack Harris and Paul Kupperberg, the old ECs with Gaines and Feldstein (TALES FROM THE CRYPT #31 was one), an IRON MAN (Circa #85?) with some pros, a CAPTAIN AMERICA with De Matteis, an early SGT. FURY with Lee and Ayers.

I feel like mentioning (for no good reason other than this is MY column, so nyaah) that I was a main character in STAR SPANGLED WAR STORIES #202. Former Louisvillian David Michelinie put me in the UNKNOWN SOLDIER story, at least under my name and likeness (aged about 25 years), although the character was shaped to fit the story. And while we're sorta on the subject, Keith Giffen pencilled Captain Kentucky into a panel in DC COMICS PRESENTS #52; however, when Sal Trapani INKED it, not being familiar with C.K., he mistook the frill on his cape/flag for buckskin and the fleur-de-lis on his chest for wings, and when Gene D'Angelo COLORED it all...I could see the limitations of C.K.'s fame! But thanks to Keith nonetheless! (That story also featured giant balloons of one of the cast of Elfquest, Judge Dredd and Cerebus.)

Paul Balze also sent in his index for Jim Aparo's work at DC (as per another old query). And here 'tis:

ADVENTURE #426, 427, 431-452, 459-461, 462c, 464-466c, 468c, 469c

AQUAMAN #40-59, 60-63c

BATMAN (c only) #284, 286, 291-295, 297-299, 301-309, 324-326, 329, 331-338, 340, 341, 348

BATMAN FAMILY #11-16c, 17

BRAVE & BOLD #98, 100-102, 104-136, 138-145, 146c, 147-152, 153c, 154, 155, 156c, 157-162, 163-167c, 168-170, 171c, 172c, 173-178, 180-182, 183c, 184, 186-189

DC SUPER-STARS #7c, 14c, 17, 18c

DETECTIVE #437, 438, 444-446, 500 ...and covers for #430, 437, 440-446, 448, 468-470, 480, 484, 492-502, 508, 509

FLASH #311

HOUSE OF MYSTERY #201, 209, 269c

HOUSE OF SECRETS #93, 97, 105, 153c

JUSTICE LEAGUE #200

LIMITED COLLECTORS' EDITION #C-37c

MAN-BAT #1c, 2c

METAL MEN #53-56c

PHANTOM STRANGER #11, 15-17, 19-26...covers for #20-24, 33, 35, 36, 39-41

SHOWCASE #94-96c

LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES #281c, 282c

CHARACTER © 1982 DC COMICS INC.

UNTOLD LEGEND OF THE BATMAN #1-3
WORLD'S FINEST #249-255, 257, 265, 266 (all covers)
WEIRD WAR #105c
WEIRD MYSTERY #4c

This pretty well covers DC, but Jim also worked for five or six years at Charlton, and those aren't listed. Additions anyone?

BILL KROPFHAUSER--Columbus, OH. WHO WROTE AND/OR DREW THE FEATURE "THREE-RING BINKS" WHICH APPEARED IN VARIOUS ISSUES OF "DETECTIVE" FROM #84-134???

MT: That was Jack Farr, who worked mostly for DC from 1943-1953. He is said to have done some inking for the more seriously themed books as well as the humor strips, of which Three-Ring Binks was one.

WHO WROTE "MYSTO, MAGICIAN DETECTIVE" AND "POW WOW SMITH," ALSO FROM DETECTIVE???

The writers may have included Jack Miller, Don Cameron, Dave Wood and France Herron; most strips were NOT written by only one writer.

PLEASE LIST WHICH ISSUES, IF POSSIBLE, CONTAINING "POW WOW SMITH" WERE DRAWN BY BRUNO PREMIANI AND WHICH BY LEONARD STARR.

MT: We're talking about the POW WOW SMITH strip in DETECTIVE, not WESTERN COMICS, right? The latter were almost all by Infantino, as is the one I have in DETECTIVE #154 (inks by Charles Paris). I only have scattered issues, but #165 and 166 are by Bruno Premiani, and #186-202 seem to all be by Starr. POW WOW SMITH appeared in DETECTIVE #151-202 and WESTERN #43-85.

JOE GULICK--Lubbock, TX. YOU REFERRED TO DELL COMICS HAVING TURNED UP WITH DIFFERENT COPIES OF THE SAME ISSUE, ONE PRICED 10¢ AND ONE 15¢. HOW ABOUT BACK COVERS WHICH SOMETIMES HAD AN AD AND SOMETIMES A PAGE OF ART? EXAMPLES I'VE SEEN ARE "ABSENT-MINDED PROFESSOR" #1099, "TOBY TYLER" #1092, "CHILLY WILLY" #1074, "MICKEY MOUSE IN MATHMAGICLAND" #819. WERE DELLS OTHER THAN FOUR COLORS SIMILARLY AFFECTED? I HOPE A CELEBRATED FOUR-COLOR AND DELL COLLECTOR SUCH AS YOURSELF CAN SOLVE THIS???

Well, I AM pretty proud of my FOUR-COLOR COLLECTION (I need 26 issues to have all 1,354, minus those numbers which don't exist). But, of course, I've never tried to buy duplicates, so I have no way of researching this worthy query. Maybe some other nutball indexer out there can help.
MT: The only issues I have are of the FOUR-COLOR variety; one I can think of offhand is 77 SUNSET STRIP #1154.

DID CARL BARKS EVER "CROSS-OVER" OTHER DISNEY CHARACTERS IN HIS STORIES??? I HEARD THAT DISNEY DISCOURAGED SUCH CROSS-OVERS BUT SOME OF THEIR SPECIAL 25-CENT ISSUES HAD SOME OF THE DARNEDEST CROSS-OVERS! BUT DID BARKS EVER DO THIS???

Yes, the 25-cent specials always had crossovers, to such an extent that you might call them team-up comics. (One story, for example, had Scamp and Chip 'n' Dale and Pinocchio.) But I don't seem to recall any regular-size issues with crossovers, nor do I recall any instances when Unca Carl did this (and I'm glad of it).

HOW ABOUT BARKS USING OTHER DISNEY CHARACTERS ON COVERS? IN WDC&S, DAISY AND GRANDMA WERE ON THE COVER OF #230, CHIP 'N' DALE ON #224 (BUT I DON'T THINK THAT'S BY BARKS), DAISY ON #158, $CROOGE ON #140, DAISY ON #138. ANY OTHERS?

Covers of WDC&S seldom had characters other than Donald and the nephews, not even DAISY very often. But I sat down and went through my entire set and came up with these covers by Barks with other characters featured on the covers: Daisy: WDC&S #138, 158, 278, 288, 309, 310, 312, 314, 316, 322 and 342; Uncle $crooge: WDC&S #140, 279, 283 (not by Barks), 295; Gladstone Gander: #277, 288; Gyro Gearloose: #277; Bolivar (Donald's dog): #95; Mickey and Goofy #296 (a Barks cover, but Mickey and Goofy seem to have been added by another artist); and the only real example of BARKS putting a non-duck character on a WDC&S cover --#321, showing Mickey on the cover of one of the nephew's comic books.

NON-BARKS WDC&S covers with characters other than Donald and the nephews are these: Mickey Mouse: #33, 41, 49, 52, 58, 75, 97; Goofy: #82; Pluto: #7, 22, 53, 182, 248; Flower (the skunk): #48; Seven Dwarfs: #43; Doc: #45; Chip 'n' Dale: #224; Dopey: #45, 47, 58; Disney's Gremlins: #34; and Grover Cleveland on #46 (on a savings bond). There were two issues which DIDN'T have Donald at all: #5 (Goofy) and #8 (Clarabelle Cow). Note that issue #300 had a scene showing nearly ALL Disney's characters (25th anniversary issue)...plus I'm ignoring all those Gold Key issues beginning with #264 with multi-section covers depicting featured characters, EXCEPT the part of the cover with the DUCKS. Whew... I hope this wasn't a total waste of time!

CAN YOU OR MIKE RUN THROUGH (ONE MORE TIME) THE LIST OF DELL COMICS THAT ARE REPUTED NOT TO EXIST???

MT: Bob Overstreet gets TCR, and has deleted some of those questioned in these pages from the '82 GUIDE, but these remaining issues (some of which have been questioned since then by both Don Stevenson and me) are still listed in the GUIDE, and we don't believe they exist--which would seem to be proven by the fact that none are in Dell's library (those listed last time):

BARNEY BAXTER #4, 5*
BARNEY GOOGLE AND SNUFFY SMITH #1-3*
DOTTY DRIPPLE AND TAFFY #7-11*
DOUBLE TROUBLE WITH GOOBER #1*
HENRY #65*
JACE PEARSON OF THE TEXAS RANGERS #10, 21, 22
JOHNNY MACK BROWN #967
JOHN PAUL JONES #1
JUNGLE JIM #20
KING OF THE ROYAL MOUNTED #28*
LITTLE IODINE #57
LUKE SHORT'S WESTERN STORIES #1, 2
NAPOLEON AND UNCLE ELBY #1
RICKY NELSON #5
SPIN AND MARTY #10
STEVE DONOVAN, WESTERN MARSHAL #1*
WILD BILL ELLIOTT #11, 12

*--newly added

Also, the Dell Publishing Company issues:

ALLEY OOP #1, 2 (1965)
CHARLIE CHAN #3, 4
THE FROGMEN #12
ROBIN HOOD #2-7
UNDERWATER CITY #1324

And these Gold Key issues:

THE ALIENS #1 (1972)
THE BLACK HOLE #5
LADY AND THE TRAMP Giant (1967)
MARGE'S LITTLE LULU SUMMER CAMP #2

BOB MILLIKIN--Wadsworth, OH. MARS BOY FIRST APPEARED IN "SUPERBOY #14...WHY WASN'T THIS CHARACTER USED IN THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES??? DID HE APPEAR IN ANY OTHER COMICS??? WAS THIS THE FIRST SUPER-POWERED KID HERO THAT SUPERBOY MET???

Well now, this was back in 1950, long before anyone ever thought of the Legion and during the time when DC had no interest in creating any new continuing characters. So this (and his reappearance in #16) comprised Mars Boy's entire career, though in stories (accompanied by covers) which were easily the best things done for SUPERBOY to that point (both by Curt Swan, of course). Superboy had met "Supergirl" in issue #5 (Nov.-Dec. '49) and "Mighty Boy" in issue #1 (Mar.-Apr. '49), but these characters both turned out to be one sort of hoax or another.

WAS COSMIC MAN, COSMIC BOY GROWN UP, EVER INTRODUCED IN EARLY ISSUES OF "LOIS LANE" AS A ROMANTIC RIVAL FOR SUPERMAN AND TERMED "THE KING OF SPACE"? IF NOT, WHO WAS ???

There was no such character appearing as a regular or recurring character. You seem to recall SOME old story you must have seen somewhere, but I can't locate it. If so, even if this fella was used only once, I DOUBT that he was supposed to be Cosmic Boy grown up.

WAS THERE EVER AN ORIGIN OF STRAIGHT ARROW IN THE COMIC STRIP OR HIS BOOKS? WHEN DID FANG FIRST APPEAR IN "STRAIGHT ARROW"? WHO WROTE THE COMIC AND WHAT WAS THE RUN OF THE DAILY STRIP? WHERE DID S.A.'S ARCH-FOE BLACK FEATHER APPEAR? HOW MANY COMICS WERE LIFTED FROM S.A. RADIO SCRIPTS???

MT: Neither Don or I have extensive knowledge about Straight Arrow, but I do know that Gardner Fox was a (if not THE) writer on both the strip and the comic book. A STRAIGHT ARROW expert will have to answer the other queries, I'm afraid.

WHAT TRIBE WAS STRONG BOW A MEMBER OF? DID HE HAVE A HORSE???

Strong Bow, a DC western character who appeared in ALL-STAR WESTERN, was only described as the last survivor of his tribe, which lived "beyond the misty mountains." He must have walked from tribe to tribe in his adventures, as I can find no horse for him in any of them. MT

WHAT WAS THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF HOPPY IN "BRICK BRADFORD" THE NEWSPAPER STRIP? WHAT WAS THE KID'S REAL NAME IN "KING OF THE ROYAL MOUNTED" ???

Bob Bindig, are you listening?

WAS THERE EVER AN ORIGIN OF STRAIGHT ARROW'S PALOMINO FURY, PERHAPS IN HIS OWN MAGAZINE? HOW MANY WESTERN HEROES' HORSES HAD THEIR OWN COMICS? WHAT WAS THE NAME OF PACKY MacLEOD'S HORSE? HOW ABOUT RED MASK'S HORSE ???

So you wanna horse around, eh? I just happen to have that single issue of STRAIGHT ARROW'S FURY (A-1 COMICS #119), and Fury's origin IS shown as a wild and free horse whom Straight Arrow "adopts" only to protect him from a bunch of horsie hunters. Fury isn't "his" horse...they just "ride together," see? Sure. Other heroes' horses with their own comics include GENE AUTRY'S CHAMPION (19 issues from Dell '51-'55), ROY ROGERS' TRIGGER (17 issues, Dell, '51-'55), ROCKY LANE'S BLACKJACK (Charlton, 11 issues, '57-'59), and the one with the long title, THE LONE RANGER'S FAMOUS HORSE HI-YO SILVER (36 issues, Dell, '52-'60). In the cases of Champion and Trigger, when their solo comics were cancelled they joined their masters as co-stars in THEIR books, sometimes dominating the issues by soloing in stories. Other horses with their own titles include Charlton's BLACK FURY, and Dell's FURY (lotsa Furies, eh?). And MISTER ED! I can't figure out who this Packy MacLeod is; there was a Packy LAMBERT on the FURY TV series (and in the comics) who had a horse named "Lucky." And Red Mask's horse (Tim Holt's horse also, since he became Red Mask) was named Lightning and was a dead ringer for S.A.'s Fury, both golden palominos.

C. FRANK HART--Jacksonville, FL. IN "WORLD'S FINEST" #30 THERE APPEARED AN AD FOR "THE GUMPS" #4 WHICH WAS PUBLISHED BY BRIDGEPORT HERALD CORP. I WAS NOT AWARE THAT DC CARRIED ADS FOR COMICS COMPANIES OTHER THAN DC, ALL-AMERICAN OR EC, AND RELATED TO THIS QUESTION, AFTER MAX GAINES SOLD ALL-AMERICAN COMICS TO DC, WHO WERE THE PRINCIPLE STOCKHOLDERS IN INDEPENDENT NEWS DISTRIBUTORS?

MT: Few realize that most of the comics companies of the '40s were connected to each other in some ephemeral way, whether it be by benefit of DC eventually buying the rights to reprint their material and use their characters or because the people publishing the comics were related by blood or marriage. DC carried ads not only for All-American (Max Gaines' sister company which eventually was bought by DC), EC (originally Educational Comics, and a subsidiary of DC), and the single Bridgeport Herald, but for both Prize and ACG--both of which had people on their publishing boards who were related to people at DC. Thus, you may see issues of PRIZE COMICS, BLAZING WEST or JUSTICE TRAPS THE GUILTY in a '40s DC comic. This isn't as unusual as it sounds; Don Rosa says that NBC once placed ads on CBS.

WHAT WAS THE LAST ISSUE OF "NATIONAL" THAT UNCLE SAM APPEARED IN OR WAS COVER FEATURED ON???

UNCLE SAM was in NATIONAL #1-45 (July '40-Dec '44) and cover featured on #1-41. He also appeared in UNCLE SAM QUARTERLY #1-8 (Fall '41-Fall '43), the comic that became BLACKHAWK with #9.

WHAT WAS THE LAST ISSUE OF "FEATURE" THAT DOLL MAN APPEARED IN OR ON???

Doll Man (wotta sissy name for a hero, eh?) was in FEATURE #27-139 (Dec. '39-Oct. '49) and was cover featured on #32-74 (even numbers only except for #47), 77-139. Doll Man also had 47 issues of his own title (Fall '41-Oct. '53).

WHAT WAS THE LAST ISSUE OF 'SMASH" THAT THE RAY WAS COVER-FEATURED ON???

The Ray was in SMASH #14-40 (Sept. '40-Feb '43) and on the covers of #15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, and 27.

WHICH ISSUES OF "CRACK" FEATURED OR COVER-FEATURED THE BLACK CONDOR OR CAPTAIN TRIUMPH???

The Condor was in CRACK #1-31 (May '40-Oct. '43) and on the covers of #2-18 (even numbers), 20-26. Captain Triumph was in #27-62 (Jan '43-Sept. '49) and on the covers of all those issues.

WHAT WAS THE LAST ISSUE OF "PLASTIC MAN" THAT WAS PRE-COMICS CODE???

The last pre-Code issue was PLASTIC MAN #53 (Apr. '55). This reminds me of how amusing the reprints are that later appeared in PLASTIC MAN! In a pre-Code issue, a villain named Mirror-Man falls off a roof and is SHATTERED to death; in the post-Code reprint, Woozy Winks turns away from the edge of the roof with a look of disgust on his face (as in the original)

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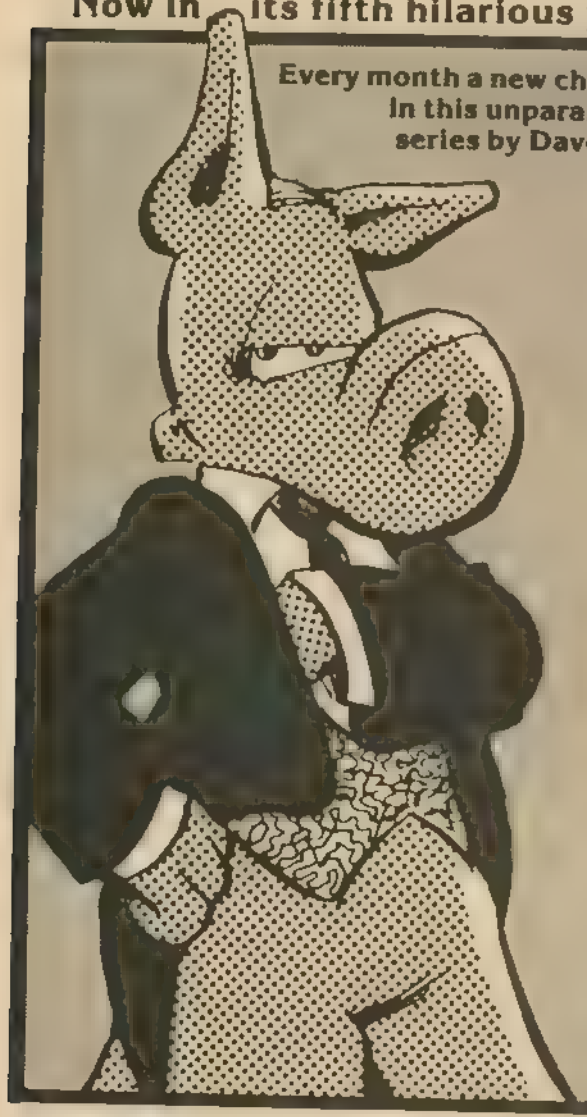

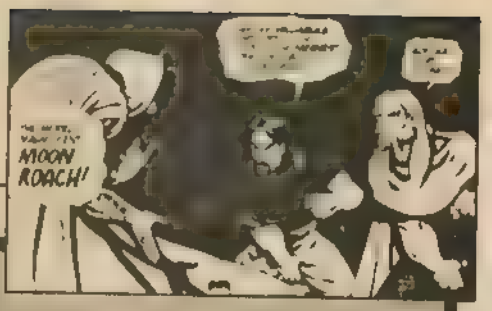

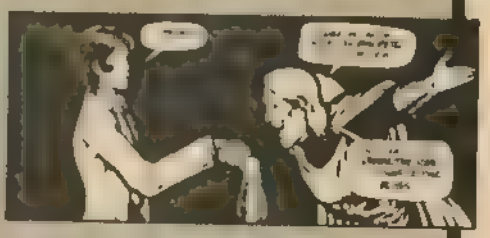

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but now he's saying something like "Well, the police caught him down on the ground." In another pre-Code story, the villain, Mr. Aqua, hides in a pitcher and Woozy accidentally DRINKS him to death; in the post-Code reprint you see Woozy gaping at the empty pitcher in horror, but now saying "Well, Mr. Aqua must have gotten away." And then there was the reprint about a vampire who was constantly shown wide-mouthed, but without a single tooth in his head! Chortle.

WHAT WAS THE FIRST WAR COMIC; I.E., THE FIRST COMIC DEVOTED TO WORLD WAR II WHICH BEGAN PUBLICATION AFTER THE END OF THE WAR???

I believe Dell had the earliest war comics such as WAR COMICS #1-8 in 1940, WAR STORIES in '42, and WAR HEROES in '42. The first post-war war comic may have been Atlas's WAR COMICS in December '50--just as another war was beginning in Korea.

MY LAST QUESTION HAS BEEN BOTHERING ME FOR YEARS: IN 1959 WHEN THE FLASH WAS REVIVED, THE NUMBERING SYSTEM CONTINUED WITH #105. BUT WHEN "GREEN LANTERN" WAS REVIVED THE NEXT YEAR, IT STARTED OVER WITH #1 INSTEAD OF #39. WHY IS THIS???

MT: The question may be lost to antiquity, but my guess is that the post office objected to beginning the numbering at a point that the book had been cancelled at over a decade before. Or, DC felt like it.

MARK WAID--Richmond, VA. WHO WAS THE FIRST SUPER-VILLAIN TO COMBAT THE SILVER-AGE GREEN LANTERN???

"Silver-Age," huh? Anyway, GL fought "the Invisible Destroyer," (all you could see was his costume) in SHOWCASE #23 (Nov.-Dec. '59), GL's second appearance.

I KNOW THAT THE "UNCLE BEN AND AUNT MAY" STORY FROM "STRANGE TALES #97 HAS BEEN REPRINTED, BUT I FORGET WHERE. ANY IDEA???

I don't recall either. But for those unfamiliar with this li'l oddity, it was a standard mystery story by Lee and Ditko which happened to feature an elderly couple referred to as "Aunt May" and "Uncle Ben." It really had NO relation to Peter Parker's latter-day relatives... the only physical resemblance was the way the woman wore her hair in a bun. But it's fun to think about.

Uncle Ben and Aunt May as they appear in STRANGE TALES #97

WHO DID THE ART IN "THE BRAVE AND THE BOLD" #63? THE INDEX IN #150 SAYS JOHN ROSENBERGER, BUT I DOUBT IT IS, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF OTHER ERRORS IT CONTAINS (ART FOR #65, FOR EXAMPLE, IS McLAUGHLIN/GIORDANO, NOT PREMIANI).

The Supergirl-Wonder Woman team-up in #63 is definitely John Rosenberger. Jim Mooney did the cover. The Doom Patrol-Flash issue has a Premiani cover, but the interior art is by Sal Trapani and Dick Giordano. MT

WHAT WAS THE FIRST SUPERMAN STORY PUBLISHED IN "SUPERMAN" OR "ACTION" DRAWN BY CURT SWAN???

Ah, this one intrigued me, so I spent some time lookin'! The earliest Swan work in SUPERMAN I happened to spot was in #97 (May '55); this was a story in which Jimmy Olsen was the main character as is the case with other Swan stories which popped up in these old issues of SUPERMAN, which leads me to believe that they are just overflow stories from the pages of JIMMY OLSEN, where Swan had been a regular artist since the very first issue. In ACTION, the first Swan work I see is in #244 (Sept. '58), although he had been doing the covers since #232, a year earlier. But if you're looking for Curt Swan's first appearance as a regular artist on the Superman family, it's SUPERBOY #5 (Nov.-Dec., 1949). Swan had work in most every issue of early SUPERBOYs and his stories always made the rest of the issue look like chopped liver.

DUANE SWEAT--Portales, NM. SEVERAL YEARS AGO, DC DID A SERIES IN "WORLD'S FINEST" ALONG THE LINES OF "BATMEN OF MANY NATIONS." CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT ISSUES THE STORIES ON THIS THEME APPEARED IN???

The group's name eventually became the Club of Heroes (of which Superman and Batman were members along with Robin), and included the Knight, the Squire (of England), the Gaucho (a South American), the Legionary (Italy), and the Musketeer (France). The first story (BATMAN #62) featured only the Knight and Squire; DETECTIVE #215 and WORLD'S FINEST #89 featured all five.

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GARY DUNAIER--Flushing, NY. I'D LIKE TO SEE AN INDEX OF LETTERS OF COMMENT THAT WERE WRITTEN BY FANS WHO LATER BECAME PROS. FOR EXAMPLE, ROY THOMAS HAD LETTERS PUBLISHED IN THE EARLY '60S (J.L.A. #1 AND FANTASTIC FOUR #15) AND FRANK MILLER SAYS IN "DAREDEVIL" #169 THAT ONLY "A HANDFUL" OF HIS LETTERS WERE PUBLISHED. ON THE TOPIC OF LETTER COLUMNS, I'D LIKE TO KNOW WHEN THE FIRST LETTER COLUMNS APPEARED IN MARVELs OR DCs AND WHAT WAS THE FIRST COMIC BOOK WITH A LETTER COLUMN ???

Perhaps readers can help out with these ...they're a bit more than I wanna try to research. (Do you want the first Marvel or DC with letters, or the first issue of EVERY TITLE with letters?) But as for the earliest comic-book letter columns...ECs had letter pages back in the early '50s, of course, and so did ACG comics. Marvel had letter columns in some of their war and mystery comics in the early '50s as well. DC's REAL FACT COMICS contained one of their earliest letter columns, one issue of which contained a letter from one Harlan Ellison. But the VERY FIRST letter page was in the early '40s in the pages of Fiction House's PLANET COMICS when they ran reader's letters under the heading of "The Vizigraph."

IN THE I.C. IN RBCC #143 (JUNE '78) YOU SAID THAT "DONALD DUCK-FOUR COLOR" #9, PURELY ON THE BASIS OF CONTENT, IS WORTH ABOUT 50¢ OF THE $1800 ($2200 TODAY) "THEY" WANT FOR IT. PURELY ON THE BASIS OF CONTENT, WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST VALUABLE COMIC, AND HOW MUCH IS IT WORTH???

You've got me puzzled here. Sounds like you're asking me, in an obtuse manner, what are my favorite single comics. This question I've answered before, as well as now deal with in my "Comic Hall of Fame" column which alternates with I.C. But what really bothers me is that it sounds as though you're implying that before you can understand any comics "worth" you

need to see a dollar price-tag on it, which you should know is totally opposite of everything I stand for! As for what the dollar worth should be for my favorite issues, you're getting dangerously close to being inflicted with some response like "How much is a sunset worth?" or some maudlin nonsense like that! Next question, quick, before I can't stop myself...!

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO MITCHELL MEHDY, THE GUY WHO PAID $1801.26 (OR WHATEVER) FOR AN "ACTION" #1 ALMOST TEN YEARS AGO???

I couldn't care less, really. I just hope he's moved on and is now trying to screw up somebody else's hobby besides OURS with his publicity-mongering.

WHAT WAS THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF LUKE CAGE??? I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT IT WAS IN "HERO FOR HIRE" #1 BUT THE PRICE GUIDE (YOUR FAVORITE BOOK, EH?) SAYS CAGE'S ORIGIN IS "RE-TOLD."

Just another drastic fubar. That WAS his debut.

RICK SASSAMAN--Tamaqua, PA. I NEED THE FIRST AND LAST DATES OF "FLASH GORDON" SUNDAY PAGES BY MAC RABOY (I'VE GOT IT NARROWED DOWN TO JULY '48 TO DEC. '67), AND RUSTY RILEY BY FRANK GODWIN (MAURICE HORN IN HIS "WORLD ENCYCLOPEDIA OF COMICS" STATES "RUSTY" BEGAN JUNE 27, '48, BUT I HAVE A "RUSTY" SUNDAY DATED JUNE 2, '48).

Another strip question I can't answer. How about you, Ken Barker?

GEORGE CLARK--Chicago, IL. DO YOU KNOW OF ANY SOURCES FOR ALBUMS BY MY FAVORITE FRENCH ARTISTS, JACQUES TARDI, HUGO PRATT, AND GEORGES PICHARD???

MT: This is the kind of thing that Bud Plant usually carries; the Pacific Comics Club also carries a mid-'70s Hugo Pratt book; both advertise in THE BUYER'S GUIDE, and occasionally here.

ANTHONY GILLIES--Watson, AUSTRALIA. IN WHAT COMIC ISSUE WAS IT REVEALED THAT THE COLLECTOR WAS THE BROTHER OF THE GRANDMASTER??? IN WHAT COMIC ISSUE WAS THE REAL NAME OF MAGNETO REVEALED???

There must be several Marvel readers out there who have this info at their fingertips. I don't.

FRED HINNEGAN--Chatham, Ontario, CANADA. ARE THE STORIES IN "MARCH OF COMICS" COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM THE REGULAR COMICS, OR ARE THEY REPRINTS??? PARTICULARLY THE "SPACE FAMILY ROBINSON" AND "TUROK" ISSUES. ALSO, WHERE CAN I GET THEM UP HERE IN THE GREAT WHITE NORTH, EH???

MT: The MARCH OF COMICS issues I have (about fifty or sixty) are all original, non-reprints of the bigger books. They ARE reprints of each other, though; frequently the new issues are only partially new (game pages, etc.). The only place these have been reprinted, to my knowledge, is in the GOLDEN COMICS DIGEST and WALT DISNEY COMICS DIGEST series. Where can you find them? Beats me. Sears stores is the name on most of my most recent acquisitions, but I've never seen them there. Look in ads for them, I'd say.

ED ZARGER--Corry, PA. WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF DENNIS THE MENACE IN COMIC BOOKS? I KNOW IT WAS PUBLISHED BY STANDARD, PINES, AND FAWCETT BEFORE MARVEL GOT HOLD OF IT. HOW FAR DID THE FAWCETT SERIES GO? I RECALL SEEING TWO DIFFERENT SERIES IN TOWN--"DENNIS THE MENACE" AND "DTM BONUS MAGAZINE." IS THIS THE SAME FAWCETT THAT PUBLISHED "CAPTAIN MARVEL" BACK IN THE EARLY '50S? HOW ABOUT A SHORT HISTORY OF THE COMPANY, ESPECIALLY FROM CM'S DISAPPEARANCE UNTIL NOW???

The strip/panel began in 1951, created by Hank Ketcham, and became a comic book, published by Standard, in August of '53. With #15 (Mar. '56) Standard changed their name to Pines (the name of the publisher); with #32 (1959), the company was sold to the Hall Syndicate, who owned the rights to DTM. Hallden continued as the publisher until the early '70s or so, when the company was purchased by Fawcett Magazines (yes, the same company that published CAPTAIN MARVEL), and in the mid-'70s Fawcett was bought out by CBS Publications, who published it through the conclusion of the original series (1980). Marvel then ran with it for a little over a year.

Fawcett left the comic-book biz in 1954, 'tis true, but they continued to publish their line of magazines, which included POPULAR MECHANICS, among many others. They became a distributor of comic books somewhere along the line, distributing the Archie line as well as the comics coming out of their own company. My understanding of the whole matter is that the last incarnation of Fawcett was actually a continuation of Standard/Pines/Hallden rather than their old operation. MT

ANDREW JOHNSON-Charlottesville, VA. WHO EDITED, WROTE, ETC. DC'S "DOBIE GILLIS" COMICS, AND WERE THEY AS GOOD AS THE TV SHOW???

MT: Lawrence Nadel and Murray Boltinoff were the editors, and Bob Oksner drew all the issues, but the writers are still a mystery. Arnold Drake may have done some for Boltinoff, but before that, we may be dealing with France Herron or Jack Miller--or some heretofore unrevealed humor writer for DC.

Are they as good? Natch, no comic, as good as it can be, is going to equal a good TV show or movie, but I think the early ones especially captured the flavor of the series. And since Oksner's women all tend to resemble Tuesday Weld ANYWAY, the art was nice.

WHAT WERE THE FIRST AND LAST ISSUES OF THE FOLLOWING BOOKS EDITED BY UNCA MORT WEISINGER: "ACTION," "ADVENTURE," "BATMAN," "DETECTIVE," "WORLD'S FINEST," "SUPERMAN," "JIMMY OLSEN," "LOIS LANE," "SUPERBOY" AND "CAPTAIN ACTION"??? DID HE EDIT ANY OTHER BOOKS BESIDES THE ONES I LISTED???

"Unca" Mort Weisinger was Story Editor (the name editors had before Whitney Ellsworth retired in 1959) at DC from 1941-1970, so he probably edited part or all of forties titles like MORE FUN, BOY COMMANDOS, REAL FACT, STAR SPANGLED COMICS and LEADING COMICS as well as the Superman family books. So I couldn't really guess at an accurate first issue for the books that began earlier than the '50s. He stopped editing BATMAN and DETECTIVE around 1955, dropping WORLD'S FINEST as well until he picked it up with #142. His final issues: ACTION COMICS #392, ADVENTURE COMICS #396, WORLD'S FINEST #197, SUPERMAN #232, JIMMY OLSEN #132, LOIS LANE #103, SUPERBOY #148, and CAPTAIN ACTION #2. Weisinger edited several of the first try-out books in the SHOWCASE series (FIREFIGHTERS, MANHUNTERS, LOIS LANE) but nothing else since the '40s excepting annuals. MT

COULD YOU GIVE ME A QUICK C.C. BECK INDEX???

Again, as much as is shown in Jerry

Bails' WHO'S WHO OF AMERICAN COMIC BOOKS: Charles Clarence Beck (born 1910), worked as a cartoonist for the Fawcett pulp line before joining their fledgling comics operation in 1939, where he drew SPY SMASHER, IBIS, and of course, CAPTAIN MARVEL. Along the way he created Captain Tootsie for Tootsie Rolls, and VIC VERITY for Vic Verity Publications (imaginative, weren't they?), as well as running a comic shop with Pete Costanza which provided most of Fawcett's work to their end in 1953. He returned to the comic-book world briefly in 1966 with FATMAN, THE HUMAN FLYING SAUCER, and then again in 1972-73 with SHAZAM! for DC.

SOMEONE TOLD ME THAT THE CURRENTLY-GIVEN ORIGIN OF GREEN ARROW IS NOT THE ORIGINAL ONE. IF THIS IS TRUE, CAN YOU TELL ME G.A.'S ORIGINAL ORIGIN???

MT: Well now, which "original" are we talking about? DC recently retold (and changed) the origin of GA from the late '50s which Jack Kirby drew. I suppose you're talking about the origin circa 1941; in that one, Oliver Queen was taught his bowman skills by American Indians. I've never read it, so I don't know the details, but that differs from his later origin, in which he was forced by neccessity, having been shipwrecked by crooks, to develop his own skills. The difference in origins is easily explained as the earlier one belongs to the Green Arrow of Earth-Two, who was a member of the Seven Soldiers of Victory.

IS HENRY BOLTINOFF, OF CASEY THE COP/SUPER TURTLE FAME, RELATED TO MURRAY BOLTINOFF?

He's his older brother. Henry is drawing the STOKER THE BROKER panel and the NUBBIN comic strip at the moment--and if it's ever published, look for a page or two of his in Whitman's ASTRAL FRONTIER. MT

CAN YOU GIVE ME A LIST OF ALL OF GREEN ARROW'S GADGET ARROWS???

Can you count all the grains of sand on the beach?

COULD YOU GIVE ME A HISTORY OF S&K'S STUNTMAN, AND ALL OF HIS APPEARANCES???

Stuntman debuted in April-May of '46 in STUNTMAN COMICS #1, appeared in a second issue of that title, then in ALL-NEW COMICS #13 (Jan. '46), BLACK CAT #9 (Jan. '48, a reprint), GREEN HORNET #39 (May '48) and finally in THRILLS OF TOMORROW #19 and 20, partial reprints of #1 and 2 (Feb. '55-Apr. '55).

CAN YOU PROVIDE A HISTORY OF SKYWALD PUBLICATIONS???

Sol Brodsky and Israel Waldman were involved in the publication of an earlier series of reprint titles called first IW and then Super Comics in the 1959-64 era. After Marvel had taken the plunge into black-and-white magazines in an effort to seize Warren's hold on the market, Brodsky and Waldman reuinted to publish NIGHTMARE (Dec. '70) and PSYCHO (Jan. '71), black and white comics in magazine format. Soon after they were joined by a trio of adventure comic books in the four-color 48-page 25¢ format: BLAZING SIX-GUNS (two issues), JUNGLE ADVENTURES (three) and WILD WESTERN ACTION (three). All three titles had been published by Super or IW, underscoring the connection between the two, and these books and the black and whites contained a generous selection of reprints of ME, Fiction House, Avon and even Marvel material as well. Skywald put out four more titles in the color comic format, BUTCH CASSIDY #1-3, THE SUNDANCE KID #1-3, THE BRAVADOS #1 and THE HEAP #1. BUTCH CASSIDY #3, October '71, was the last new color book to appear. (I recall a romance title and a teen-age humor book, but I can't remember their names.) PSYCHO and NIGHTMARE were joined along the way by THE CRIME MACHINE #1 and 2, THE HELL RIDER #1 and 2 (an interestingly-similar precursor to Marvel's bike-rider) and SCREAM. NIGHTMARE, PSYCHO and SCREAM lasted until 1975, with 23,24 and 11 issues, respectively. MT

So, until next time, send all your questions on the wunnerful world of comic books to me:

KENO DON ROSA
1603 WOODLUCK AVENUE
LOUISVILLE, KY 40205

...and don't forget your nominations for inclusion in my other fledgling column, "The Comic Book Hall of Fame."

Be seeing you...

Obituaries

Gene Day, artist on MASTER OF KUNG FU for the past couple of years, died in his sleep of a coronary September 23, 1982. He was 31. Day had most recently been taken off both MASTER OF KUNG FU and FURTHER ADVENTURES OF INDIANA JONES, and was preparing to work on the WARP SPECIAL for First Comics as well as arranging to reunite with Doug Moench at DC. In his career, Day worked for Kitchen Sink, Skywald, ORB, and Sal Q.'s HOT STUF', published a black-and-white magazine called DARK FANTASY and was the subject of a hardcover album called FUTURE DAY. He scripted, drew, colored and published over the years, and for Marvel he worked on STAR WARS as well as the aforementioned strips.

Noel Sickles, the most famous "unknown" artist to ever draw TERRY AND THE PIRATES, died October 3rd at the age of 72. Sickles connection with comics occurred chiefly in the '30s when he was a ghost on the SCORCHY SMITH strip for the ailing John Terry, and took it over when Terry died. He gradually began experimenting in the chiarascuro and Ben Day type of drawing which was to influence an entire generation of cartoonists. Eventually, his assistance on Milton Caniff's TERRY AND THE PIRATES, a much-more circulated strip, brought his genius to the notice of everyone, though no one was really aware it was Sickles' work they were looking at. His career after the experimentation he'd accomplished in a very short time led him into magazine illustration as well as fine art, which occupied him until his death, though he had collaborated one last time with Caniff on sample strips for a proposed BRUCE LEE comic strip in the late '70s.

Texas Trio member and co-publisher of the legendary early-'60s semi-pro fanzine STAR STUDDED COMICS Larry Herndon died in September of muscular dystrophy. He was 37. His comic shop, Remember When, will continue to be run by his wife and partner.

Et Al

Fantagraphics is publishing a new magazine devoted to vintage and classic comic strips. Edited by Rick Marschall, former Field Newspaper Syndicate and Marvel Comics editor, NEMO: THE CLASSIC COMICS LIBRARY, a bi-monthly magazine priced at $2.95, will feature TERRY AND THE PIRATES, POLLY AND HER PALS, GASOLINE ALLEY, Alfred Andriola's rare YANKEE RANGERS, Dik Browne, Bill Blackbeard on George Herriman, cartoons by Carl Barks, and T.S. Sullivan in its first issue. The strips are represented by complete stories rather than in short dabs; future subjects include an interview with Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster featuring their original SUPERMAN submissions, Jeff MacNelly, Floyd Gottfredson, LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE from the '30s, SCORCHY SMITH by Noel Sickles, Bert Christman and Frank Robbins, and a FLASH GORDON sequence by Harvey Kurtzman and Frank Frazetta. What we're wondering: where's SIR BAGBY?

[Continued from page 15]

Why the cover and introduction were not done by the aforementioned creators. Answer: They were not allowed to do so UNLESS they signed the "work for hire" contract. Both creators have refused to sign. Obviously, this is an important point to Marvel, since both Brunner and Englehart have agreed to sign a "per job" agreement. What's strange is that this book is being touted as part of the "Epic" line of creator-owned comics. (?)

"Art For Art's Sake" Dept.:

Under the medieval Marvel Comics dictum, the only thing acceptable is total capitulation and never mind appropriateness or justice. They offered the creators a very good fee, more or less a bribe, for signing away the total rights to everything they had ever written or drawn in the past or future for Marvel Comics. THAT is the "work for hire" contract.

"Sell Out" Dept.:

The other two books being reprinted have no such company/creator conflicts, since neither Starlin nor (surprisingly) B. Smith (who stood for artistic integrity years ago) have any integrity left! In agreeing to Marvel's demands, they have signed away any future claims to work they obviously consider worthless! Or perhaps just allowed themselves to be exploited at a time of financial need (the "quick buck" syndrome).

"Opinion" Dept.:

Marvel Comics has evolved into a fascist organization--into a company which reflects the ruthless tactics the government used against (then) Atlas Comics, which survived the onslaught of the early Fifties only to use the same strong-arm tactics against its own creators!

So I say, in supporting Marvel Comics, you further inhibit the work of the creators who make comics what they are. As for myself, I wouldn't work there if they paid me to!

[To set the record straight: the DOCTOR STRANGE reprint series, contrary to the first reported news items about it, does not bear the Epic Comics logo. MT]

FRANK HAYES, P.O. Box 10860, Chicago, IL 60610: Well...no. Frank Hayes isn't a lawyer.

I work on the editorial staff of the READER, a weekly newspaper here in Chicago. In fact, the major part of what I do involves finding errors or inaccuracies and keeping them out of print...errors like "Frank Hayes is a lawyer"...

But it was nice of you to say so, Mike.

Working editorial staff, one learns (or has to learn) a great deal about certain subjects--copyright and trademark and libel law, for example. One also learns a little bit ("diddley-squat" is the technical term) about a great many other things. For example, I know that there are lots of opinions as to what makes good television. At one time or another most of them have been inflicted upon me.

DONAHUE, for example, is certainly the best of its type--but it's only a talk show, after all, people sitting around swapping opinions with a little fact thrown in to season the sauce. Something like an apa-zine, only more organized. And I could make nasty remarks about GENERAL HOSPITAL's cheesy production and pathetic acting, but none of that matters anyway if you enjoy the show.

Still, one measure of whether something is "good television" is whether an audience will watch a show more than once. DONAHUE installments are rerun only rarely; GENERAL HOSPITAL, never. BOB NEWHART has been in reruns constantly since the end of its network run...which certainly indicates that SOMEBODY thinks it's good TV.

Me, my all-time favorite is still that American surrealist Gothic, GREEN ACRES. So there. Nyeah!

(And one more thing about Brian Doherty's letter--the next person who calls me "Mister Hayes" gets it. Whatever happened to the days when only the shirt-and-tie accountant types who figure out which comics will be cancelled were called "Mister"? I keep looking behind me, trying to figure out who they're talking about...)

I also know diddley-squat about movies: the reason SWAMP THING is so hard to track down is that it was a real stinker, on the screen and at the box office. I think it closed in Chicago after one week, which should give you some idea. It now appears only in one night stands at repertory houses and on college campuses, and occasionally on a drive-in triple bill.

Finally...maybe it's just me. Maybe I'm getting crotchety--again. But Mark Paniccia's letter made me mad. The line that got me was "You're gonna tell me to take my own advice and say, 'Well, don't read it if you don't like it.'"

Look, folks, we live in the real world. There are lots and lots and LOTS of fans, with all kinds of ideas about what's good and what's not. And for as long as I can remember there have been folks who say, "If you don't like what I write--if it makes you mad--if it upsets you--DON'T READ IT!"

In other words, "if you don't like what I've said, I don't want to hear about it. If you don't agree with me, just shut up."

I don't remember Sam Kujava ever expressing that opinion. Or Mike Tiefenbacher. Or any of the many fans who LIKE a spirited discussion of comics even if it sometimes verges into the vitriolic, as Paniccia's letter does. Even vitriol is a good sign--it shows that people CARE about comics. And that, it seems to me, is what being a fan is about.

Sam, you can have your soapbox back now...

[Y'know, I should've suspected that you were a newspaperman and not a lawyer, since your letters are constructed in the short, concise (often one-line) paragraph style of newspaper writers, and not in long entangled paragraphs of legalese. Mebbe I was just thinking of another correspondent/fan/lawyer, Rich Morrissey. Maybe.

Ahh...at last, someone who won't laugh in my face when I confess to having collected 150 (of 170) episodes of GREEN ACRES on videotape... MT]

JIM IVEY, The Cartoon Museum, 4310 S. Semoran, Orlando, FL 32807: It has been called to my attention by one of your readers that I have been defamed in one of your letters columns (from a Brian Doherty of Jacksonville).

It is past casual fan-comment to state that I "buy wholesale...to escape paying taxes"...!!?? How could you run such a ridiculous--potentially damaging comment??

First off, a dealer HAS to buy wholesale.

Also, if one is talking of State Sales Tax, one does NOT pay sales tax on wholesale purchases.

One purchases wholesale in hopes of making a profit (trust that doesn't stagger your writer!).

Any stock purchased becomes a part of one's invetory--and does figure in Federal taxes (on page 2 of "C" form).

Just what in the pluperfect hell was he trying to say--why would he be sore at a dealer for "buying wholesale" ...?!?! (I suggest a basic business course for him.)

In any case, as editors, you should know better than to run such a statement -- it is libelous, no less!

[Indeed it is, and it was not printed in the intention to be libelous--in fact, the very argument you make is one which I was planning to make myself to that letter. We have been running an ongoing discussion of dealers' methods and I was planning to take the comments and show how silly (and casually phrased) they were. However...

Brian said a lot of other things as well that I wanted to comment on, and I forgot about that line. Obviously, I realize how damaging it might have been, and I apologize if it did. It was my mistake and I take responsibility for it's

appearance. Again, sorry. MT]

ANDY YANCHUS, Brooklyn, NY: The main reason for this letter is to correct an error which crept into the First Comics News section of TCR #205. It states that Janice Cohen is "colorist of all of Marvel's major comics covers." Now, I'm sure you were simply repeating info supplied by First, but that statement is very far from the truth.

George Roussos is the person responsible for the bulk of the coloring on Marvel's covers. George is on staff four days a week, and his primary job is to color covers. He sometimes colors ads and does corrections on interior pages, but the covers come before everything else. That's the way it's been for the six years that I've been with Marvel, and George's staff position goes back many, many years before that.

Other people also color covers. I used to be second in line for cover coloring. I'd fill in when George was off or out sick, and I'd give a hand when too many covers came due at the same time. Quite often I would also do the covers of the books that I regularly colored (X-MEN, FUN AND GAMES, SHOGUN WARRIORS). Of course, George is entitled to vacation time, and when he is gone for weeks at a time, other colorists are called in to do covers. Glynis Wein has filled in the most, and Janice Cohen, Marie Severin, Steve Oliff, Christie Scheele and others have helped out. Once in a while an artist will color his own cover.

So, you see, Marvel covers are colored by many people. Even so, George Roussos probably colors more than three times the amount of everyone else combined. Janice Cohen has colored many of Marvel's major titles in the past, but it's been years since she has done any cover work on the regular line of comics. Coloring is assigned by the editors these days, but there was a time when I assigned all the coloring. My records have Janice down for just over thirty covers, the last of which was THOR #272. That's far from being "colorist of all of Marvel's major comics covers."

Now, for the reason that I referred to my cover work in the past tense. I've left my staff position of coloring coordinator. No more nine-to-five grind of referencing books and fixing other people's mistakes. I've gone the contracted freelance route (yes, Marvel colorists now have contracts), and I'm really getting to enjoy setting my own hours of working at home! MARVEL TALES and MARVEL UNIVERSE are my only regular titles at the moment, but Shooter has asked me to do DAZZLER, which is undergoing some overhaul.

STEPHEN SCOTT BEAU SMITH, 110 Lewis Avenue Apt. #7, Harboursville, WV 25504: Recently, there has been a tragic death in the world of comic-book heroes. The death I'm speaking of is that of the Whizzer.

The comic-book world lost one of its oldest and best heroes with the printing of the Marvel mini-series VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH #2. Bob Frank (the Whizzer) was one of the first superheroes that I was ever introduced to. My father was a reader of the ALL-WINNERS SQUAD back in the forties (he's forty-seven) and I was very lucky that he had kept a few of those older issues. To myself and my dad, Bob Frank was like an old friend.

I was really hoping that Bob Frank would be around for one more adventure with two of his old pals, the Sub-Mariner and Captain America. But I guess we can't have everything.

You may be wondering why I'm sending this to TCR instead of Marvel Comics and Bill Mantlo. Well, I figure that more true, hard-core fans of the All-Winners Squad would have a better chance to read this tribute to the Whizzer.

[Although I can't share the opinion that the Whizzer was one of the comics' best heroes, I am also at a loss to see what was gained by killing him off. It seems to me that Marvel is making a concerted effort to eliminate any of the characters involved in their forties line or Roy Thomas's INVADERS series (counting Miss America, the Patriot--who's dying--and Union Jack, as well as the Blue Diamond, who went out into space somewhere). Marvel and Mantlo may well consider the story in #2 simply the tying up of loose plot threads; for me, I'll take three's plot involving finding a brother (who's still alive at story's end) over any "noble death" plot.

And when you consider that the number of people who cared enough about the Whizzer to be touched by his death were probably more repulsed than touched, the whole thing doesn't make much sense, does it? MT]

DAVID A. SIMPSON, 53 Erskine Street, Aberdeen, AB2 3NR SCOTLAND: Pierce Askegren's letter in #204 reminded of a Steve Ditko story I once read about some army type who was caught in an atomic explosion which, rather than killing him, gave him the powers of flight, dematerialization, etc.

I read it in a British reprint comic, so I don't know where it first appeared, but the overall style makes it obvious to me that Charlton published it in the late '50s/early '60s. This story's similarity to the origin of Captain Atom is TOO CLOSE to be coincidence.

Perhaps one of your more knowledgable readers could give further details.

[It kind of sounds to me like NUKLA, a Dell Comics character that Ditko did an issue of (#4, 9/66)--but you may be correct about a sf story appearing in one of Charlton's sf/space magazines before CAPTAIN ATOM. The fact that the Charlton space comics' current market value is well above their esthetic value (especially in story) has kept me from collecting many issues of SPACE ADVENTURES, OUTER SPACE, OUT OF THIS WORLD and MYSTERIES OF UNEXPLORED WORLDS from the '50s, so I can't research the question personally. Maybe Don Rosa can? MT]

EDWARD McARDLE, 12 Waverly Avenue, Ivanhoe, Victoria 3079, AUSTRALIA: Lou Mougin's COMMENT on deaths was quite interesting. The death of Gwen Stacy was dramatically quite justifiable. It brought home to Peter that powers are not infallible, and was an important plot element, unlike most of the others mentioned.

The series which cried out to be mentioned was THE DEFENDERS. It seems that if one of the characters is killed, cut into cubes and fed to the dog, this is only a temporary setback, and he or she may be expected to reappear in a few issues, possibly scratched a little.

The one which has had a lot of talk is the death of Jean Grey, and yet, from a comics standpoint, she must be regarded as one of the least-dead characters around. As far as can be seen, there was no body. Jean Grey/Phoenix was one of the most powerful beings in the universe, and yet a machine which happened to be lying around was capable of killer her? The rationale of her death was a) she had become too powerful to handle, and b) there was a misunderstanding between the writer and editor.

It seems more likely that Jean/Phoenix wanted to withdraw from the situation, and having a touch of the old Cosmic Awareness, recognized the Skrull machine lying around as an interdimensional transmitter (or else, quickly converted it to one!) and teleported herself to an alternate universe. At the same time she hoped to give Scott and the others the impression she was being destroyed, so their grief would not last too long. But Phoenix, being a part of our universe, could not go, and was dissipated. Jean has gone to some other universe or dimension; for better or ill, separated now from her evil alter-ego. (Which is why Darkseid could resurrect Phoenix.)

As author, it is of course Chris Claremont's prerogative to decide whether Jean Grey should ever be found. But it must be considered that when he stops writing the book, one of his successors will be tempted to rein-

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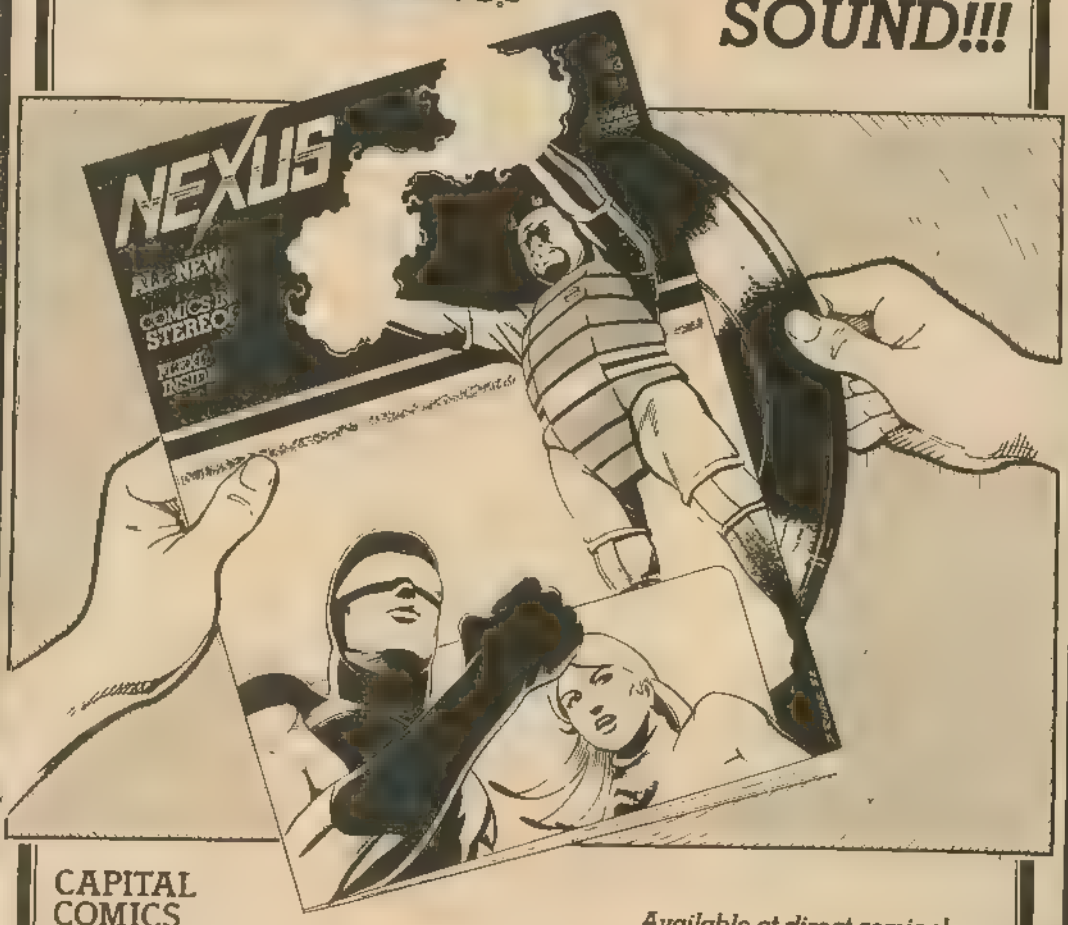

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carnate Jean, so it might be better to do it himself. All the grief of her friends would in no way be demeaned by her recovery from another world. And her guilt was as Phoenix, so peace should be possible with the S'h'i'a'r, or whatever they are. After all, Galactus is a bit mean too.

By the way, is WONDER WOMAN #298 the first comic approved by the Comics Code to feature a full-size illustration of a woman with no clothes on?

Hooray, I managed to write a letter without once saying "II"...Oops.

[The WW cover in question is the very tasteful one in which we see the skeletal "remains" of WW. I dunno, is it the first? MT]

MIKE SOPP, 438 West 32nd, Erie, PA 16508: I stumbled across an interesting bit of information today that I though you might be interested in hearing--in an interview on the CBC radio program SUNDAY MORNING, Christopher Reeve has said that SUPERMAN III is not only his last movie as Superman, but the last movie that Richard Lester and the writers (I assume David and Leslie Newman, but the story did not mention them) "can stand."

The interview and story was interesting, with a lot of behind-the-scenes stuff that will become common knowledge as soon as the film comes out. The movie itself is being filmed in Calgary, and it will pit Superman versus a group of villains who are taking over the world with the help of a computer expert (played by Richard Pryor). Lois Lane (and therefore, Margot Kidder) will not have much of a role in the movie, as Lana Lang (Annette O'Toole) is the new love interest. (All in all, it sounds like a Cary Bates story, which makes me less than enthusiastic about seeing it. What is ironic is that Bates is supposed to be the movie's advisor.) According to the interviewer, the title sequence has some scenes that he called slapstick (Lester did not, however, compare Reeve's humor to Cary Grant).

Right at the end of the segment was when Reeve dropped the bombshell. Basically, he and Lester believe that they have done all they can do with Superman. Reeve also said "the character is more important than the actor," and suggested that another actor could be found to play Superman.

Then they explained, without knowing it, why DC chose to give Supergirl a new book. The producers of the movies, the Salkinds, have decided that they are going to do a SUPERGIRL movie next--with the lead a sixteen- (that's what the story said) year-old blonde who lives in Chicago.

Just thought you'd like to know...

[Actually, since Cary Bates is my favorite SUPERMAN writer, the probability that the plot will be similar to one of his stories is good news to me. MT]

KENNAN SULLIVAN, 26 W154 Jewell Road, Wheaton, IL 60187: The past several issues of TCR have been closer to what I expected it would be like when I first subscribed, especially those ones with the Information Center. Sadly lacking of late, however, are the strips (playing havok with continuity) and Collecting Comics. I wonder if it is possible to coax more work out of Michael Mignola. His covers have such good style and a certain symmetry.

I agree with Sam Kujava, there are a lot of books out there that fail to give me my money's worth. It would seem that with new publishers (Pacific Comics, Eclipse, JC Productions, and the soon-to-be-released First Comics) that the "Big Two" should now be forced to offer a higher quality product so that those people buying the new titles will remain faithful to the old. Instead, I think that what has been created is a more complicated problem of which titles to buy. At the current prices, and with the alternative comics costing even more, it has become necessary to carefully select because a small handful can cause great distress to the wallet. Furthermore, it is difficult for those who buy with continuity in which, for the span of a few months, contain a favorite artist, writer, etc. It is now the case where a small number of individuals are about the only ones creating stories that have real value, and that will contribute something of significance to their universe.

The problem of a low, though growing, circulation may also be caused by reasons other than price. Perhaps it exists within the attitudes of what was and may be still the primary audience of the comics, the bubble-gum brigade. These people who are not surrounded with reading material, but with watching machines, everything from video games to the more straight-forward computers and ever-present television. Who wants to have to sit down, read a book where some imagination is needed to fill in between panels when there are these other things available to do it for one. And don't forget, some of these people have to ask for the money to buy things so there is the situation of one initial purchase supplemented with perhaps a few cassettes versus many regular naggings. It is easy to imagine the parents saying "haven't you got enough of those?" "Don't you think you're too old for those" (gasp!) or even "are they really worth it?"

It is sad to think that this industry is pricing itself out of business, however much of the blame can be placed on the cost of paper, ink, rising salaries, staples, etc.

One solution may be the production of a less-expensive package aimed primarily at the brigade, to try to win more of them to the fold, and which could possibly reduce the cost of the regular ones by bankrolling them in part. This package could be smaller, have fewer pages, and more expensive ads. The main goal being to transport the readers from one format to the other.

[This has been an often-discussed problem here, with my main point being that the abandonment of the early grade school audience may doom the industry, as comics are an acquired reading skill--something people who haven't read them in their youth rarely pick up on in their teens or early adulthood. Too many comics seem to be aimed at a target audience (through their themes, chiefly) older than the pre-teen market that would seem to be the most vulnerable, saleswise.

And the fact that the 60¢-per-book price can take a large chunk out of kids' allowance these days is also a contributory factor to the downswing in sales over the past fifteen years. If, somehow, a 16-page comic-line could be marketed (and now, not many newsstand dealers want to handle such a low-priced product), it might do a bit to take the strain off...but only if kids--who don't know from angst--were only treated with a bit more consideration. MT]

Et Al

Ken Pierce has published two more comic strip reprint books in the same format as the MODESTY BLAISE and SPIRIT square-bound paperbacks: AXA 2: THE DESIRED by Donne Avenell and Enrique Romero, and THE PHANTOM VS. THE SKY MAIDENS by Lee Falk and Ray Moore. Both have introductions by Cat Yronwode. Each is $5.95 and may be ordered postpaid from Ken Pierce, Box 332, Park Forest, IL 60466.

ELFQUEST #14 features "The Fall" by Wendy and Richard Pini," and will be shipping November 22nd. It features Savah lost in the dark and Suntop alone vs. Winnowill.

Fans of NEIL THE HORSE from its run in the Menomonee Falls GUARDIAN (#118-146) and its appearance in the first funny animal issue of CHARLTON BULLSEYE will be delighted to hear that the publisher of CEREBUS, Deni Sim, will be publishing ARN SABA'S NEIL THE HORSE as a softcover, Baxter paper perfect bound book in January of next year. The book will be 80 to 100 pages and feature NEIL's adventures from the daily and weekly strips as well as several brand new stories. Inquiries may be addressed to Deni at Aardvark-Vanaheim Inc., P.O. Box 1674, Station "C," Kitchener, Ontario CANADA N2G 4R2.

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No? WHAT AM I SAYING? TELL THEM—
AH.. CAP'N KENTUCKEH? YOU KNOW ME -- AH'M THA REVEREND BILLY-BOB BLESMEE OF THE "TELEVISION CHUHCH OF SELF RIGHTEOUS MEDDLING"
UH... HELLO...?
YOU AHW FAMILYUH WITH THA' WUHK OF MAH GROUP, "THE MORAL MASS", KNOWN AS "MORASS" FO' SHAWT, THA' GROUP WHEAH EVEN THA' HOPELESSLY FOOLISH FIND THEY KIN GAIN ATTENTION IN NUMBUHS.
WHICH OF OUR GODLESS PERSONAL FREEDOMS ARE YOU OUT TO PROTECT US FROM TODAY?
AH'LL LET MAH CONGREGATION TELL YOU ABOUT IT IN A LIL' HYMN. (THEY AHW EASILIH AMUSED.)
OH WE GOT TROUBLE! RIGHT HERE IN RIVER CITY! THAT STARTS WITH 'T' AND THAT RHYMES WITH 'V' AND THAT STANDS FOR "VIDEO GAMES"!
VIDEO GAMES ??
YES, MAH FREN', VIDEO GAMES! WE HAVE PROOF THAT THA' SOUNDS FROM THOSE EE-VIL MACHINES CONTAIN SATANIC MESSAGES PLAYED IN REVUHSE. LISSEN HEAH...
GLXPTZNKT ZSPTHVQN!
I DON'T LIKE ANTI INTELLECTUALS TELLING ME I, AS AN EVOLUTIONIST, DON'T BELIEVE IN GOD SIMPLY BECAUSE MY RESPECT FOR THE ALMIGHTY CREDITS HIM/HER/IT WITH MORE THAN THE MOTHER-GOOSE MENTALITY OF "GENESIS"
CLEAH AS DAY: "AWL HAIL LUCIFUH, OUR LAWD AN' MASTUH!"
?!? ALL I HEARD WAS "GLXPTZNKT ZSPTHVQN"!
FREN', YOU AHN'T TRYIN' HAWD 'NUFF?
AWRIGHT, OKAY, SO I'LL LOOK INTO IT! BUT I THINK THIS IS A LOT OF HOOEY!
THAS' FINE AH'LL BE IN TOUCH.
BY THA' WAY.. YOU GONNA BUHN IN HAYUL FO' AWL ETUHNITIH.
HAVE A NICE DAY NOW, HEAH?
LATER, AFTER VISITING SEVERAL VIDEO ARCADES:
WHAT A WASTE OF TIME! I'M GOING TO TAKE AN "OCTA-HEXA-GLOP" BOOST AND FLY HOME.
HEY! LOOK, YOU GUYS! $WOW! IT'S CAPTAIN KENTUCKY!!! NEAT-O!
WATCH IT, THERE! OOOFF!
ZAP!
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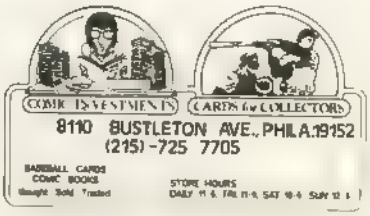

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21-34 1.50
35 (STARLIN) 2.
36-50 1.25
51-UP 1.

HOWARD THE DUCK
1 10
2 5.
3 5.
4,5 2
6-10 1.50
11-31 1
ANNUAL*1 1.

HULK
1-6 (INQUIRE)
102 12
103-110 6.
111-120 4
121-140 3.
141 3.50
142-160 2.50
161-176,177 2.
177,178 (WARLOCK) 4.
180 (WOLVERINE) 7
181 (WOLVERINE) 15.
182 (WOLVERINE) 7.
183-199 1.50
200 2.50
201-250 1.50
251-270 1.25
271-UP 1.
GIANT SIZE*1 2.
SPECIAL*1 7
SPECIAL*2 4.
SPECIAL*3 3.
ANNUAL*1,5 2.50
ANNUAL*6,8 1.50
ANNUAL*7 (WOLVERINE) 2.50
ANNUAL*9,10 1.25

INVADERS
1 6.
2 3.
3-5 2
6-11 1.50
12-19 1.25
20 2.50
21-41 1.
GIANT SIZE*1 3.50
ANNUAL*1 1.50

IRON FIST
1 (BYRNE) 10.
2-5 4
6 14 3.
15 (X-MEN) 15

IRON MAN
1 30.
2 12
3-5 7
6-10 5
11-20 3.50
21-46 3.
47 (SMITH) 6
48-54 2.50
55,56 (STARLIN) 4.
57-70 2.50
71-99 2
100 4
101-117 1.50
118 (BYRNE) 5.
119,120,123-128 1.50
121,122,129-149 1.25
150-UP 1.
GIANT SIZE*1 2
SPECIAL*1 4.
SPECIAL*2 2.
ANNUAL*3,4 1.50

IRON MAN & SUBMARINER
1 7.

KAZAR
1 (1971) 2.
2,3 1.50
1 (1974) 2
2-10 1.50
11-20 1.
1 (1981) 2
2-9 1
10 1.50
1-UP 1.

KING CONAN
1 2.50
2-5 1.50
6-UP 1.

KULL
1 6.
2,3 5.
4-10 2.
11-15 1.50
16-29 1.

LUKE CAGE (POWERMAN)
1 5.
2-10 2.50
11-20 2
21-40 1.50
41-47 1.25
48-50 2.50
51-56,58-70 1.50
57 5.
71-UP 1
GIANT SIZE*1 1.50
ANNUAL*1 1.

MANTHING
1 9
2-4 4.
5 3.
6-11 2.
12-20 1.50
21,22 1
GIANT SIZE*1 2.
GIANT SIZE*2,3 1.50
GIANT SIZE*4,5 9.
1 (1974) 1.50
2-8 1.

MARVEL COLLECTORS
1 7.
2-4 3.50
5-10 2.50
11-22 1.50

MARVEL FEATURE
1 (1971) 12
2,3 6.
9-12 1.50

MARVEL PREMIERE
1 (WARLOCK) 6
2 4
3 (DR STRANGE) 6
4 (SMITH) 4
5-10 2
11-14,16-20 1.50
15 (IRON FIST) 5.
21-24,26-30 1.25
25 (BYRNE) 3.
31-35,38-40 1.
36,37 2
41-46,49,50 1.
47,48 2
51-56 1.
57-60 (DR WHO) 1.50

MARVEL SPOTLIGHT
1,2 3.50
3,4 2
5 (GHOST RIDER) 7
6-8 2.50
9-18 1.50
19-27 1
28,29 (MOON KNIGHT) 2
30,31,33 1.
32 (SPIDER-WOMAN) 3

MARVEL TALES
1 24
2 12
3 6.
4,5 3.
6-15 2.50
16-30 1.50
31-100 1.25
101-UP 1.

MARVEL TEAM-UP
1 15.
2,3 8.
4 (X-MEN) 6.
5-10 4.
11-20 3.
21-30 2.50
31-40 2
41-52 1.50
53 (BYRNE X-MEN) 9
54,55 (BYRNE) 4
56-58 1.50
59-70,79 (BYRNE) 2.50
71-78,80-99 1.25
100 (BYRNE,MILLER) 3.
101-UP 1
ANNUAL*1 (X-MEN) 10.
ANNUAL*2 2
ANNUAL*3,4 1.50

MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE
1 10.
2-5 5.
6-10 3.
11-20 2.50
21-40 1.50
41,42,44-49 1.
43,50,53-55 2.
51 (MILLER) 3.
52-56 1.50
57-UP 1.
ANNUAL*1 2.
ANNUAL*2 5
ANNUAL*3,4 1.50
ANNUAL*5,6 1.

MASTER OF KUNG-FU
15,16 5
17 3.
18-30 1.50
31-50 1.25
51-99 1.
100 1.50
101-UP 1
GIANT SIZE*1,2 1.50
ANNUAL*1 1.50

MICRONAUTS
1 (GOLDEN) 4.50
2-5 (GOLDEN) 2.50
6-10 2.
11-20 1.50
21-37 1.25
38 1.50
39-UP 1.
ANNUAL*1 2
ANNUAL*2 1.50

MOON KNIGHT
1 2.50
2-5 1.50
6-14 1.25
15 1.50
16-UP 1

NICK FURY
1 (HEA) 8
2,3 5.
4-7 4
8-11,13-15 2.
12 (SMITH) 3.
16-18 1.50

NOT BRAND ECHH
1 7
2-4 5.
5 4.
6-8 3.
9-13 2.

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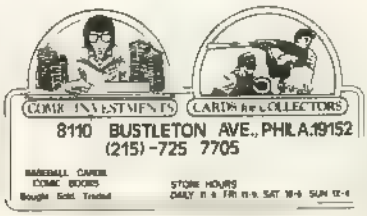

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NOVA

1	5
2,3	3
4-10	1.25
11-25	1

PETER PARKER

1	4
2-5	2.25
6-10	2.
11-20	1.25
21-26,29,30	1.50
27,28 (MILLER)	18.
31-50	1.50
51-UP	1
ANNUAL #1	1.25
ANNUAL #2,3	1.

ROM

1	3.
2-5	2
6-10	1.25
11-17	1.25
18 (X-MEN)	2.
19-UP	1.

SILVER SURFER

1	60.
2	25.
3	20.
4	85.
5-7	15.
8-10	12.
11-18	9.
1 (1982)	2.

SPIDERMAN

1-10 (INQUIRE)	45.
11-13,15	45.
14	50.
16-20	25.
21-30	12
31-40	10.
41-50	7.
51-60	5
61-80	4
81-89,91-95	3.
90,96	4
97,99	3.
98-98 (DRUGS)	7
100	10.
101,102	6
103-120	3.
121,122	15.
123-140	2.25
141-160	2
161,162 (X-MEN)	4.
163-170	1.25
171-188,191-199	1.25
189,190,200	2.25
201-UP	1.
ANNUAL #1	25.
ANNUAL #2	12.
SPECIAL #3,4	7
SPECIAL #5-8	4.
KING SIZE #9	2.25
ANNUAL #10-18	2.
ANNUAL #19	2.25
ANNUAL #19,15	2.
GIANT SIZE #1	2.25
GIANT SIZE #2,3	1.25
GIANT SIZE #3-6	1.25

SPIDERWOMAN

1	2.
2-5	1.25
6-20	1.25
21-37,39,40	1
38 (X-MEN)	1.25
41-UP	1.

STAR WARS

1	7.
2-4	4.
5-10	3.
11-20	2.
21-38	1.25
39	2.
40-50	1.25
51-UP	1

STRANGE TALES

101-105 (INQUIRE)	7.
106-109	18.
110 (DR STRANGE)	60.
111	20.
112,113	9.
114	12.
115 (DR STRANGE)	20.
116-120	6.
121-129	3.25
130 (BEATLES)	6.
131-134	3.
135 (NICK FURY)	6.
136-138	5.
139-168	2.25
169-177	1.
178 (WARLOCK)	5.
179-181 (STARLIN)	3.
182-188	1.
ANNUAL #1	35.
ANNUAL #2	30.

SUBMARINER

1	12
2	6.
3-5	4
6-10,14	3.
11-13,15-20	2.25
21-38,57,59	2
39,54,56	2.25
40-53,60	1.25
55,61	2.
62-72	1.
SPECIAL #1	2.
SPECIAL #2	1.25

TALES OF SUSPENSE

39-41 (INQUIRE)	
42-45	29
46-48	15.
49-51,55	8
52	10.
53-58	7.
59,63	5.
60-62,64-99	3.

TALES TO ASTONISH

27,35,36 (HULK)	8.
37-40	25.
41-43	12.
44	14
46-48,50	9.
49	10.
51-60	5.
61-70	4
71-80	3.
81-91	2.25
92,93	6.
94-99	2
100,101	3.

THOR

83-89 (INQUIRE)	
90-92,94-96	24.
93,97	28.
98-100	24
101,103,104,110	12.
102,105-109	16.
111,113-125	7.
112	12
126	5
127-140	3.
141-157	2.25
158	3.25
159-164	2
165,166 (WARLOCK)	3.25
167-179	2
180,181 (ADAMS)	4.
182-192	1.25
193 (SURFER)	5.
194-199	1.25
200	5.
201-240	1.25
241-299	1.
300	2.
301-UP	1.
ANNUAL #1	12.
ANNUAL #2	5.
ANNUAL #3,4	2.25
ANNUAL #5-7	1.25
ANNUAL #8,9	1.
GIANT SIZE #1	1.25

TOMB OF DRACULA

1	7.
2-5	3.
6-10	2.25
11-30	1.25
31-70	1.

WARLOCK

1	6
2,3	3.
4-8	2.25
9-15 (STARLIN)	3.

WEREWOLF BY NIGHT

1	4
32,33 (NEBRASKA)	5.

WHAT IF ?

1	5.
2-5	3.
6-12	2.25
13 (COLOSSUS)	3.
14-20	2
21-26,28-30	1.25
27 (PHOENIX)	3.
31-UP	1.25

X-MEN

1-10 (INQUIRE)	
11-20	10.
21-30	7.
31-40	4
41-49,52	3.25
50,51 (PHOENIX)	8.
53 (SMITH)	10.
54,55	6
56-63,65 (ADAMS)	10
64,66-80	3.
81-93	2.25
94 (NEW X-MEN)	60.
95	30.
96-99	20.
100,101 (PHOENIX)	24.
102-107,109,110	12.
108 (BYRNE)	15.
111-115	10.
116-120	9
121-129	6.
130 (DAZZLER)	7
131-136	4.
137 (PHOENIX DIES)	6.
138-143	2.25
144-149	1.25
150	2
151-UP	1.25
GIANT SIZE #1	60.
GIANT SIZE #2	12
SPECIAL #1	9.
SPECIAL #2	8.
ANNUAL #3	4.
ANNUAL #4,5	2.25

D.C.

ACTION

300	6.
301-320	5
321-340	3.
GIANT-20	5.
341-360	2.25
GIANT-33,45	4.
361-380	2
GIANT-57	3.
381-424	1.25
425,437,443	2.25
426-436,438-442	1.25
444-469	1.25
470-499	1.
500	2.
501-UP	1.

ADVENTURE

311-321	9
322-345,347,350	6
348,349,351	5
352-372,375	4
373,374,376-380	5.
381-400	2.25
401-417, GIANT 10,20	1.25
GIANT-69,81	3.
418-424	1.25
425	2.25
426-458	1
459-466	1.25
467-UP	1.

ALL STAR SQUADRON

1	2
2-5	1.25
6-10	1.25
11-UP	1.

AQUAMAN

11-20	4
21-30	3
31-49	2.
50-52 (ADAMS)	8.
53-58	1.25

ARAK

1	2.
2-5	1.25
6-10	1.25
11-UP	1.

BATMAN

131-140	9.
141-150	8.
151-171	6
172-180	4
GIANT-17	5.
181-190	2.25
GIANT 24,27,30	3.
191-210, GIANT 45,55	2
211-219	1.25
GIANT-61,67	2
219 (ADAMS)	6.
221,223-231	1.25
222 (BEATLES)	4.
232 (ADAMS)	5.
233,235,236	1.25
238-242	1.25
GIANT-88	1.25
DC-8 (80 PG.)	2.25
234,237 (ADAMS)	5.
243-245,251,255	4.
246-250,252,253	1.25
254,256-261	1.25
262-280	1.25
281-299	1.
300	1.25
301-UP	1.

BRAVE & BOLD

45 51	4
52,53	6
54	9
55-60	3.
61,62	4
63-78	2.25
79 (ADAMS)	9
80-86,93 (BWS)	7
87-99,101	2
100 (ADAMS)	5
102 (ADAMS)	3.
103-116	1.25
117-150	1.25
151-UP	1

DETECTIVE

301-330	5
331-368,370	4.
369 (ADAMS)	8
371-390	3.
391-394,396,398	2.25
399,401,403,405	2.25
404,409,411-420	2.25
395,397,400,402	7.
406,407,408,410	7.
421-445	2.
446-460	1.25
461-463,469	1.25
470,480	1.25

D.C. PRESENTS

1	3.
2-10	2.25
11-20	2.
21-25	1.25
26 (TEEN TITANS)	15.
27-UP	1.

FLASH

131-140	5
141-150	4
151-160	3.
GIANT-21	4.
161-180	2
GIANT-34,46	2.25
181-200, GIANT 58,70	1.25
201-216,220	1.25
GIANT-82,111	1.25
217-219 (ADAMS)	5.
221,222,224,225	1.25
227,228,230,231	1.25
223,226 (ADAMS)	3.
229,232	1.25
233-274,277-299	1.25
275,276	1.25
294-299	1.
300	1.25
301-UP	1.

GREEN LANTERN

31-40	5
41-50	4
51-75	3.
76 (ADAMS)	50.
77 (ADAMS)	25.
78-80 (ADAMS)	20.
81-84 (ADAMS)	15.
85,86 (DEVIL)	20.
87,89 (ADAMS)	12
88	8.
90-99	1.25
100	2.25
101-UP	1.

JIMMY OLSEN

31-40	9
41-50	7.
51-70	3.25
71-90	2.25
91-100	2
101-132	1.25
133 (KIRBY)	2.25
134-150	1.25
151-163	1

JUSTICE LEAGUE

31-40	5
41,46-48	4
42-45	3.25
49-60	3
61-80	2.25
81-93	2
94 (ADAMS)	7
95-102	2.25
103-120	2
121-130	1.25
131-192	1.25
193	1.25
194-199	1.25
200	2
201-UP	1

LOIS LANE

21-30,33	10
31,32,34-50	5.
51-70	2.25
71-95,104	1.25
96-103,105-108	1.25
112-157	1
ANNUAL #1	3
ANNUAL #2	4

METAL MEN

1-5	5
6-10	4
11-27	3.
28-41	1.25
42-56	1.

SHOWCASE

44	5.
45	7.
46-58	4.25
59 (TEEN TITANS)	8
60,61,64	4
62,63,65	2.25
66-72	1.
73 (DITKO)	4.25
74	1.25
75 (DITKO)	3.25
76	2.25
77,78	1.
79,81,82	2.
80	3.
83,84 (WRIGHTSON)	7.
85-87	3.
88-104	1.

SUPERBOY

101-120	5
121-140	4.
141-174	2.25
GIANT-59,71,83	3.
177-200	1.25
201-258	1.

TEEN TITANS (NEW)

1	15
2	8.
3-5	5
6-10	4
11-15	2.25
16-UP	1.25

SUPERMAN

165,167	8
166,168-180	6.
181-200	5.
201-239	3.
240-245	2
246-248	1.
250,251,253	1.
249,252,254	5.
255-299	1
300	2.
301-UP	1.

WONDER WOMAN

121-130	8
131-150	6.
151-170	5.
171-195,197,198	3.
196	4
199,200 (SCARCE)	7
201-230	1.25
231-UP	1.

WARLORD

1	8.
2-5	4.
6-10	3.
11-20	2.25
21-40	1.25
41-47,49	1.25
48	2.
50-UP	1.

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WHEW WOTTA' **JOLT**! THAT RADIOACTIVE GLOP MUST HAVE WEIRD PROPERTIES I HAVEN'T EVEN **DREAMT** OF???

WHERE THE HECK AM I? ALL I CAN SEE IS THIS ENDLESS LINE OF LUMINOUS BALLS AND →

YEOW!

GLIP-GLUP-GLIP-GL

THAT VORACIOUS BEACHBALL-THING TRIED TO **EAT** ME! WHAT SORTA' FEVER DREAM→

BYEEOOP!

200

"200"? WHAT'S THIS "200" DEAL???

HERE COMES ANOTHER ONE! AT LEAST **HE** LOOKS **CUTE** AND **HARMLESS**. WOTTA' RELIEF.

200

FOONK

C.K.'S PRE DECODED SECRET MESSAGE: ALL THIS "CUTE" MERCHANDISING JUNK! I'D LIKE TO SEE "GARFIELD" & "STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE" GET IN A KNIFE FIGHT & HACK OUT EACH OTHER'S ENTRAILS.

OUCH! NOW WHAT?! SOME SORT OF DESOLATE, ALIEN LOOKING LANDSCAPE AND→

WEEEOOOOOOO

BAM!

WEEEEEEEEEOO

FUEL

WHEW! THAT WAS A **CLOSE** ONE! AT LEAST I'M **SAFE** NOW.

FOONK!

JEEPERS! FIRST C.K. WAS IN **THAT** MACHINE, THEN **THIS** ONE...

LOOK! NOW HE'S FLASHED OVER INTO **THIS** ONE?

ZOW

SOMEBODY GET ME OUTTA' HERE!!!

TO BE CONTINUED!

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Archie News

The Red Circle comics line, which was supposed to debut this month, has yet to surface with either shipping dates or contents listings. We will, of course, list it when the folks up at Archie forward the information. We'd guess there has been some sort of delay in plans.

Coming Comics

ARCHIE'S PALS 'N' GALS No. 162, January. Stan Goldberg did the cover. [10/26]

LAUGH No. 376, January. Stan Goldberg did the cover. [10/26]

LAUGH COMICS DIGEST No. 44, January. Dan DeCarlo did the cover. [10/26]

ARCHIE No. 321, January. Dan DeCarlo did the cover. [11/2]

ARCHIE'S TV LAUGH-OUT No. 88, January. Stan Goldberg did the cover. [11/2]

ARCHIE DOUBLE DIGEST COMICS MAGAZINE No. 5, January. Dan DeCarlo did the cover. [11/2]

BETTY AND ME No. 132, January. Dan DeCarlo did the cover. [11/9]

JUGHEAD WITH ARCHIE COMICS DIGEST MAGAZINE No. 54, January. Dan DeCarlo did the cover. [11/9]

LIFE WITH ARCHIE No. 235, January. Stan Goldberg did the cover. [11/9]

ARCHIE GIANT SERIES MAGAZINE No. 524, January. This issue features ARCHIE'S CHRISTMAS STOCKING. Dan DeCarlo did the cover. [11/16]

ARCHIE GIANT SERIES MAGAZINE No. 525, January. This issue features BETTY AND VERONICA CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR. Dan DeCarlo did the cover. [11/16]

SABRINA THE TEEN-AGE WITCH No. 77, January. Dan DeCarlo did the cover. [11/16]

Americomics News

Americomics are slated to debut in December with a line of three full-color titles (not partially black and white as previously announced) printed on Baxter paper and priced at $2.00. The three titles include FUN COMICS, AMERICOMICS and THE BLACK DIAMOND.

BILL BLACK'S FUN COMICS will feature the adventures of Captain Paragon, the Phantom Lady and Commando D, as well as the final in a series of articles on Simon and Kirby comics by R.C Harvey on the "Mother Delilah" story in BOY'S RANCH #3. The first comic-book sized issue is numbered #4.

© 1982 AMERICOMICS

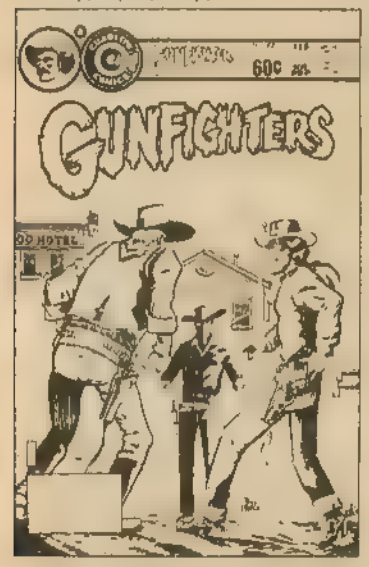
AMERICOMICS #1 features Bill Black's THE SHADE and a strip by Craig Zablo, John Beatty and Jerry Ordway, THE SLAYER. George Perez did the cover. #2 spotlights Ordway's THE MESSENGER, with a SHADE strip as the back-up. #3 stars THE BLUE

BEETLE by Rik Levins, featuring the current Beetle vs. the Golden Age character. #4 features Dan Reed's CAPTAIN ATOM story and Martin Greim's revival of ATOMIC MOUSE, both prepared for CHARLTON BULLSEYE. Down the line is a story featuring the Charlton heroes as a team: the Sentinels of Justice. Featured will be the Blue Beetle, Captain Atom, Nightshade and the Question, with story by Dan St. John and art Greg Guler. Future covers will be by Perez, Pat Broderick, Paul Gulacy, Gil Kane, Jerry Ordway, Mike Machlan and Black.

THE BLACK DIAMOND is a heroine named Tiana Mathews, who's a spy. The book, which will be quarterly, is based on a forthcoming movie which will star Lois Areno (replacing Sybil Danning). Bill Black wrote and inked the first issue, with pencils by Mark Beachum. #2 and 3 will adapt the movie. Paul Gulacy will do the covers beginning with #2.

The line is being distributed by all the major distributors, so look for them in your comic shops.

(Black's 1983 schedule includes these releases: FUN COMICS: December '82, June '83; AMERICOMICS: January, March, May, August, September, November '83; BLACK DIAMOND: February, April, July, October '83.)



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similar title which will continue: SOAP OPERA LOVE.

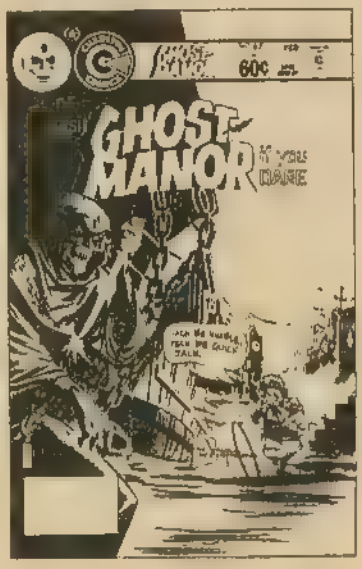
BATTLEFIELD ACTION No. 79, February. [10/11-11/4]

FIGHTIN' ARMY No. 162, February. Miguel Repetto did the cover. [10/11-11/4]

GHOST MANOR No. 67, February. Tom Sutton did the cover. [10/18-11/11]

GUNFIGHTERS No. 77, February. Bill Black did the cover. [10/18-11/11]

FIGHTIN' MARINES No. 167, March. [10/25-11/18]



HAUNTED No. 66, March. [10/25-11/18]

ATTACK No. 39, March. [11/1-11/25]

SCARY TALES No. 37, March. This is an all-new issue featuring material originally prepared for CHARLTON BULLSEYE. There's a ten-pager by William Reinhold, a monograph on dolphins by David Roman, and short strips by Mitch O'Connell, Bruce Hatten, Bud Perkins and Nigel Kitching. Reinhold did the cover. [11/1-11/25]

Charlton Coming Comics

Charlton has sliced two titles from its reprint schedule, one of which has been published continuously since 1957. BILLY THE KID ends with #153, March 1983, which ends its 25-year run. Also axed is SOAP OPERA ROMANCES, which ends with #5, March. Ironically, it had just been joined by another new reprint romance book with a

First Comics News

First Comics has officially announced Howard Chaykin's AMERICAN FLAGG, scheduled to appear in late Spring. His real name is Reuben Flagg and he lives in the world of 2031 AD, a world which is in decay following the takeover of the Earth by the all-pervasive "Plexus." Set in Chicago's

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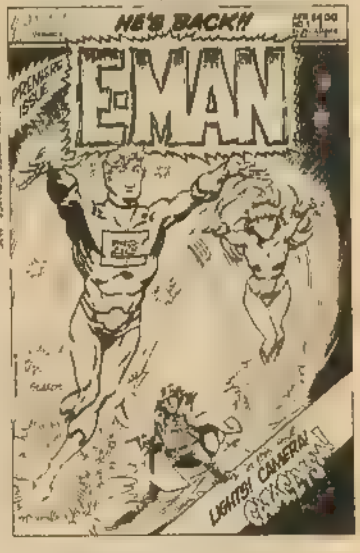
Plexmall, a combination airport, spaceport, entertainment center and hotel, which is a fortified oasis amidst assaults by armed motorcycle gangs, Reuben Flagg comes to Earth from Mars as a Plexus Ranger to help keep the status quo in the corrupt and deadly world we don't yet live in.

A WARP SPECIAL will appear in mid-March. Designed to prevent the continuity of the regular book from being disrupted while offering origins and background information on the characters therein, the book will appear on a regular (probably quarterly) basis. Peter Gillis is the writer, with originally-announced artist Gene Day (who died in September) replaced by Howard Chaykin as penciller. George Freeman will be the inker. The first issue spotlights Chaos, Prince of Madness. There will be a back-up strip, unnamed at this point.



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When First Comics takes over the publication of Mike Grell's STARSLAYER series it will be pencilled by Lenin Delsol. Grell will continue to

script, a la WARLORD.

E-Man will face a parody version of the X-Men, dubbed the F-Men, in the second issue of First Comics' E-MAN. The back-up strip will be a MIKE MIST MINUTE MIST-ERY by Max Allan Collins and Terry Beatty. The first issue's back-up strip is still being kept under wraps.

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All First Comics will be printed on the 37 pound Mando stock recently resurrected by Pacific and Eclipse Comics for their books. The first will be:

WARP No. 1, March. "The Coming of Lord Cumulus" is by Frank Brunner, Peter Gillis and Bob Smith. The first part of the adaptation of the stage play is presented and features a fantasy setting featuring sword and sorcery. The back-up story is "Rough and Tumble" by John Ostrander, Lenin Delsol and Joe Staton. The story features female cast member Sargon, Mistress of War. Frank Brunner did the cover. [11/15-11/18]

Nobody Asked Me But...

By Mike Tiefenbacher

Ahem...Jim Shooter's latest Bullpen Bulletins page calmly denies that any of the stuff mentioned first by Cat Yronwode in THE BUYER'S GUIDE and recounted here will happen, or was ever meant to. Maybe...but who expected him to say any differently? Obviously, the reason for squelching the alleged plan was the outraged fan reaction (and we only saw the mail sent to TBG and TCR; who knows how many saw fit to writer directly to Shooter?), and I'll admit it here that that's why I discussed it here. I'm not above lobbying.

Hot on the heels of that announcement, came one that DC was also planning something along similar lines, only more on the order of cleaning house by saying "Earth-One ends here," and beginning all their mainstream titles over with new origins and no past. I really don't know how much credence should be put to this rumor, as I got it fourth or fifth hand, but...

* * *

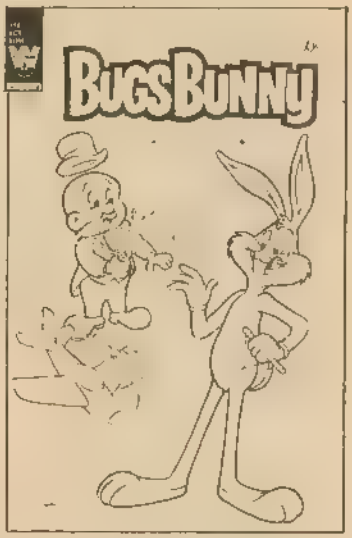
One thing that is definite is that Whitman's contract with World Color Press was cancelled, and that means that the lay-off of the company from comics will be longer than expected, if not permanent. Essentially, this means that Western isn't reserving presstime, which means they don't pay penalties for not using it. No comment on future plans could be gotten from Whitman, so it's still questionable about their revival--but by the time they come back, it's certain that most of their staff will have relocated.

* * *

The great fall of the dominant figure in comics of the fifties (Dell) to the current on-hold status of their descendant, Whitman, is not easily explained. World famous characters, pre-sold, and known formats from so many years of producing comics should have ensured that Whitman be one of the least likely to succumb to the downswing of newsstand marketing. I would be loathe to suggest that I don't have some ideas about WHY this happened, however. To wit:

1) The backbone of the company's comics sales has always been the Disney titles, chiefly SCROOGE and COMICS AND STORIES. From simply a reader's standpoint, SCROOGE has not dropped in quality over the years simply because the book is consistently reprinting Carl Barks' work; the latter is a combination of good Barks reprints, good Murry MICKEY MOUSE stories, and fair-to-poor filler material in between. This weakness in story and art is even more crucial in other Disney titles containing new work: DONALD DUCK, MICKEY MOUSE, SUPER GOOF, CHIP 'N' DALE and (notably) DAISY AND DONALD suffer from a definite lack of consistent stories, and an alarming drop-off in quality art. The Fifties-sixties Dells and Gold Keys looked as if they were drawn by people involved in the animation of the cartoons they were based on; these do not, and in some cases artists who should never be allowed near funny animals are handling the art. All of this is academic, however. Chances are that parents buy their kids' comics anyway. They don't look inside, they buy titles by their covers. And there's the rub.

Even adults have short attention spans, and let's face it: who today knows who these characters are? Disney's cartoon specials on WALT DISNEY appear infrequently, once or twice in a two month period, tops. There are no MICKEY MOUSE CLUB reruns, there are no syndicated shows featuring old Disney cartoons. Kids know Bugs Bunny, Scooby Doo and Woody Woodpecker, but do they know Chip 'N' Dale, Winnie-the-Pooh or even Mickey Mouse? Their only frequent contact with the characters is through the endless ads for Disney books and records that show up on the independent stations that show cartoons. Parents are, of course, more familiar with the characters, but if their kids would rather read about Pac-Man or the Smurfs, are the adults going to buy them Donald Duck? Sadly, unless Disney does an about face about their syndicated package of their old shorts, which apparently are being shown on foreign television networks, this situation won't change much. And if the kids don't want to read about these characters, their parents aren't going to keep buying them--and COMICS AND STORIES, which once sold three million copies per issue (it is claimed), will continue to fall in sales--if it is ever revived.



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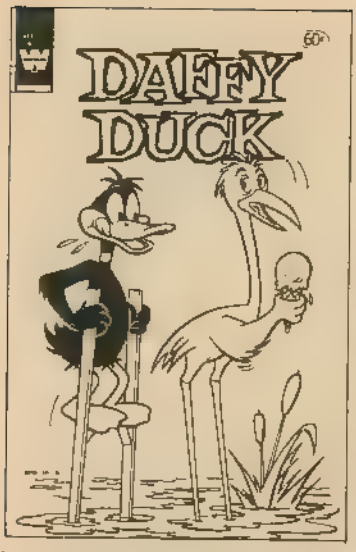
2) The Warner Bros. books are a different matter. While the storylines and approach Dell took for the Disney books were complementary, if not identical to the treatment of the characters the studio gave them, the Warner Bros. books seemed strongely encumbered by the insistence of turning all the characters into participants in a sitcom. Bugs, Daffy, Porky and all the others (with the possible exception of later, fifties characters like Foghorn Leghorn, Pepe Le Pew and the Road Runner and Coyote) were everyman characters, their world and situation changing from cartoon to cartoon. In other words, they were ACTORS, and they knew and we knew it. The characters in the comics were funny animals in a funny animal world which had rules of reality, something which never bothered the Warner Bros. creators. Consequently, the wild and outrageous characters of Bugs and Daffy were limited in their use--and hence, the books, though certainly well-done and entertaining enough in the '50s, simply didn't resemble their source.

If the Warner Bros. stable ends up at DC, let us hope they can overcome these things (and the problem caused



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by new model sheets being done for the Licensing Corporation of America, the Warner Communications subsidiary which handles licensing of these characters, and has say-so over their appearance--increasingly moving farther and farther away from their appearance in their cartoons). Obviously, there's the problem of deciding which of the many personae Bugs and Daffy have had over the years is the correct one (I'd opt for the period between '44 and '54 myself), but unless the rather more adult approach of the cartoons is approximated, they'll still be losing a sizable amount of Warner Bros. fans.

The other problem is that of art. As much as I admire the four-tier panel format of the Dells and Gold Keys, this layout simply doesn't lend itself to intricate drawing. The inking line has deteriorated over the years, unhelped by the smaller size of original artwork and the plastic plates World Color now uses to print from. The art in the cartoons is arguably the most attractive ever done in cartoon shorts--but you couldn't tell it from the current comic books.

LOONEY TUNES is a class name on TV, but the comic book has been down too long.

3) The plastic-bag distribution has not worked. The problems forseen here have developed as suspected: plastic bags have months of shelf-life and do not move fast enough for regularly-scheduled bags of new comics to replace them. Reorders have been slow, and the new issues have piled up in Whitman's warehouses to such an extent that they've seen fit to discontinue production for over six months. No fans are certain where to find the books--and when, if ever, new ones will appear at the source of the last bags they've purchased.

4) The prospective market hasn't been reached. Certainly, the market which is being reached by the comic shops is NOT the market which will buy Whitman Comics. With newsstand sales ruled out by the company because of the long-developing wastefulness inherent in the system, Whitman has to discover a better and more direct system of getting their comics to the four-to-twelve-year-olds who have always made up the bulk of their sales. What this new means of distribution might be is beyond my ken--but there MUST be a better way.

5) And Whitman's licensing of new programs, characters and movies has become overly conservative. The dependance of the line on a set of fifteen books which all have twenty-years or more of publication behind them is smart only from the standpoint that they lose nothing by taking no chances. The decay of the children's comics market, however, probably foredoomed the line for the '80s. TV tie-ins done by Gold Key--and Charlton, Marvel and DC, for that matter--have been almost uniformly failures in the '70s, but that isn't the point. Nobody knows where to look to find TV adaptations these days, and when one does turn up, it's overlooked because it's only one of 150 non-TV titles. In the hey-days of Dell, you were almost certain that EVERY new adventure show or cartoon would show up under their imprint, so you knew what to expect and where.

6) Lack of an attractive package. Let's face it, with the thin paper and cheesier printing, comics have never looked physically worse--and the people at Whitman are not doing an especially good job in the art direction department. Their logos, still the most experimental in the comics, have all been redrawn, and all are generally inferior to the preceding logos used in the '60s on the Gold Key versions. They were even better in the '50s, as is clearly seen when a '50s cover is reprinted on an '80s book. More than any other company, the thin cover stock and cheesy newsprint has hurt Whitman from an esthetic standpoint that might influence purchases. What could be done? Comics in a more permanent package? Larger, more visible books distributed through the coloring book/storybook distribution lines? I don't have this answer either.

If Whitman is gone for good, it will be bad, it's as simple as that.

* * *

Both Mark Gruenwald and Marc De Matteis have assured me that none of the planned offing of major heroes or groups of supporting characters mentioned last time has any basis in reality, and that it won't happen. Steve Rogers will be around, folks.

* * *

Would you figure that a man who had enough smarts to 1) become a millionaire playboy, 2) fill a quiver full of super-intricate and amazing trick arrows and 3) become a newspaper columnist would have enough familiarity with high-school level English to say the following (from JLA #210):

RED TORNADO: It appears the loss of "X" has disrupted the process of evaporation in this vicinity.

GREEN ARROW: Put it in English, Machine-Mind.

BLACK CANARY: Red Tornado means that the ordinary water vapor isn't being absorbed by the air, Ollie--

(I guess you get stupid when you let your beard grow. The next thing out of Black Canary's mouth would seemingly confuse him even more than Red Tornado's seemingly simple statement):

BLACK CANARY: --And since people exhale water vapor with every breath, they're creating miniature fogs--roiling into mists--and clouds--and--

(I had to look up roiling in the dictionary, and I still can't figure out what "roiling into mists" means. And I don't even have a beard anymore.)

* * *

Nitpicking? Yeah. But that same issue wants us to believe that Ray Palmer and David Dorman, sub-atomic theorists and researchers, have discovered some "pseudo-neutrino energy, smaller than protons" which is an "X-element" which affects all other elements on Earth in a catalytic reaction allowing all chemical reactions. They've also discovered it is decaying and that soon Earth will cease to function. (Luckily for the JLA and all of us who have to read the story, each team of heroes runs up against the lack of a DIFFERENT chemical reaction, which is quite a coincidence for anybody, much less all these heroes.) Anyway, I'm not about to logically dismantle the premise, since we know most of the comics ever printed have had their share of pseudo-scientific gobbledygook.

It's just that the Atom pops up to the satellite and tries to sell the idea

to the JLA. Green Arrow, still stuck in low gear, says "Come on, Shortie, it can't be that bad!" Then Barry Allen sides with Ray: "It is, Archer...I checked Ray's figures. It's true--all of it." Ahem.

Barry's a scientist, to be sure. But he's really hiding his light under a bushel, since he does work approximately equivalent to that of Quincy on TV, and he's probably more chemist than anything. That Ray could write it down so that Barry could understand it is amazing enough, but even more incredible when, two pages later, Superman--who, as you might recall, has built super-computers and all manner of scientific stuff in his Fortress--says: "It's hard to believe Ray's fears are justified."

Yeah, sure.

* * *

It's hard to have much hope for the artistic end of the new Red Circle line as drawn by Rich Buckler. At least at DC, Rich had some good artists to "inspire" him (i.e., page five, panel three, JLA #210: Jim Aparo would be proud). At Archie, the only people he can draw from are John Rosenberger, John Giunta and Paul Reinman, excepting the Fly and Pvt. Strong--who are sure to look like vintage '59 Kirby.

* * *

Speaking of Red Circle, though they're supposed to be on the stands in November, nobody who owns a comic shop that I've spoken to has been contacted by Archie yet to order any. It's hard to sell them if they're not in the shops.

* * *

Just to show we're not playing favorites, here's one for Marvel: THE MARVEL NO-PRIZE BOOK delights in pointing out ludicrous errors, chiefly in Stan Lee's books. Larry Charet points out that page ten's caption ranks right up there: "Black Bolt destroys a huge wall, freeing his people...and thirteen issues later, Reed Richards takes all the credit...backed up by a footnote! See FANTASTIC FOUR #59 & #82 for the red-faced details." 59 from 82 is thirteen issues?

"How about plot devices that just don't work. I mean, NOW way" (page 9, panel one).

Stan didn't write these.

* * *

Two months back, I outlined my confusion over a lettercol that appeared in SGT. ROCK outlining why the first Sgt. Rock story WASN'T the one that Bob Haney wrote for OUR ARMY AT WAR #81. I suspected that it was written by my friend Robin Snyder, but was not sure enough to name him; I was right, and I heard from him:

"How's that again? I? An obfuscator?

"Looking back over that editorial (which was printed in SGT. ROCK ANNUAL and not SGT. ROCK as you implied) my only regret is that I failed to identify, by name, the man who wrote all those stories. Allow me to rectify that error now. The man's name is Robert Kanigher.

"My intention was to show the linear growth of Rock from his beginnings up to the first stories in the series. Unlike other Kanigher creations such as Mary Robin, Stuart, Viking Prince, Flash and Metal Men, ad infinitum, which began full-blown in specific issues, Rock's origins are murky.

'As I wrote: 'Rock came to term in his own good time.'

"Bob Haney's version was NOT the first Rock; neither was "Hold Up Easy" (no matter how much you would like THAT to be the beginning).

"Dig out those past issues and we'll hit the HIGH POINTS together.

"In the beginning, Rock was the 'Combat Anchor Man.' The man they couldn't budge.

"In 'Fireworks Hill' he was a machine-gunner in Korea who didn't believe there was such a thing as a fightin' heart. Pitted against a human wave that couldn't be stopped, he stood like a rock.

"Next, he was the marine drill instructor, in 'The DI--and the Sand Fleas,' who inspired the boots he trained, even though he never reached the front, except in the minds of his trainees.

"In 'The Rock' he was a heavyweight contender who refused to stay down.

'The Easy Company series, in two different books, ran at this time.

"THEN came 'The Rock of Easy.'

"The first authentic Rock was 'The Rock and the Wall.' Period.

"Kanigher's continuity has NOT been lax; he simply works by different rules. His heroes ALWAYS act in character, though he pays little attention to specific details such as names, dates, etc.

"And that raises a question I have of you, Mike. In one of your DC indexes (G.I. COMBAT?) you suggested Stuart's beginning was in The War That Time Forgot. How's that again?

"Overall, your column in TCR is a breath of fresh air. Keep on typing."

Well Robin, I still remain rather confused; as all of those characters in the stories cited resemble Rock in characterization only, my guess is that you could cite literally dozens of others which contributed to what eventually became Rock. It means something to the hardcore Kanigher follower (which I most definitely am not; you seem far more enamored of him than I am), but not much to the history of Rock, which in the terms most comics historians speak of means that we deal with stories about THAT specific guy, not what he was before. In that light, Steve Canyon's early adventures as Pat Ryan would be difficult to reconcile with his later history; Fighting American and the Guardian would have antecedent adventures as Steve Rogers; et al., ad nauseum. It's interesting that you can find aspects of Rock in those stories, but they don't sway me. Haney wrote the first story generally accepted to be ROCK, as determined by the reprint in that ROCK giant from a few years back. Kubert thought it was the first.

Besides which, Kanigher's series in the war books didn't begin until after Whitney Ellsworth's name was taken off the indicia and replaced by his own. So it's a bit difficult for me to accept that Kanigher was actually planning Rock back then when there seemed to be an edict for no series in the war titles.

That statement about Jeb Stuart was an error only in that I typed the title "THE WAR THAT TIME FORGOT" in caps instead of lower case. Jeb's ghostly guardian is supernatural in nature, and most of the war that time forgot stories in STAR SPANGLED WAR were of that nature, if not exactly the same. That's what I meant, at least; sorry if I implied that he'd appeared there before --I knew he didn't, but didn't want to take the time and correct that typo on my mimeo stencil. I'll also confess to having not read many of the issues in question in that survey of the DC war titles before having written it, which is always a good way to get in trouble.

Thanks for the letter, anyway. I always enjoy reading your letter columns.

* * *

It seems I apologized too quickly. The rumor I heard in July about RKO being interested in buying Harvey Comics was true. In fact, they were negotiating to buy both Harvey AND Archie. They bought Archie (or merged with them). The problem is that there's a legal wrangle over the ownership of Harvey by the families of brothers Leon

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and Alfred. It'd be an interesting development if the two companies ended up as parts of one, wouldn't it?

-Mike Tiefenbacher

Cel Break

By Jim Korkis

SONS OF THE FAMOUS. Comic Reader Harry McCracken, who has supplied information for this column, thought it might be interesting to point out two coincidental pieces of trivia. In the 1950s, Walt Disney hired Richard Fleischer, son of Max Fleischer, who did Popeye and Betty Boop, to direct Disney's 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA. This year, Disney Studios has hired Charles Martin Smith, son of the Walter Lantz director Paul Smith, to star in the upcoming film NEVER CRY WOLF. (By the way, in that film, Charlie eats a mouse while another mouse watches. I doubt whether Disney is aware of that unconscious symbolism.)

BAKSHI NEWS. HEY GOOD LOOKIN', an unreleased Ralph Bakshi film made before WIZARDS, is due to be released shortly by Warners, who will mount an ad campaign proclaiming it "the animated PORKY'S." Preliminary information suggests that all live action has been removed from the film and that it is now wholly animated. And that forty-second bit at the end of MEGAFORCE that features a grotesque Porky Pig saying "That's All Folks" was done by Bakshi. Ralph also claims that he'll take at least a year's rest after the release of his latest rotoscoped/animated film, FIRE AND ICE.

NEW ANIMANIA ISSUE. Issue #24 of ANIMANIA, the Animated Film Quarterly, is now available for $3.00 from David Mruz, 3112 Holmes Avenue So., Minneapolis, MN 55408. This issue features articles on Betty Boop, Astroboy and Walt Disney's first studio. ANIMANIA is always highly recommended by this columnist and all true animation fans should have a subscription. ($6.00 for four issues! What a saving!)

SPECIAL THANKS. Comic Reader Jerry Beck took time out from his busy schedule to arrange for me to see some rare cartoons at M-G-M this summer. Jerry does nice things like this all the time. Along with Will Friedwald, Jerry is writing a book entitled THE M-G-M CARTOONS, which will be similar to their previously published WARNER BROTHERS CARTOONS, except that the former book will be illustrated with stills from the cartoons.

OSAMU TEZEKA FAN CLUB. The fan club is the official fan club operated by Tezuka Productions in Japan for fans of the creator of ASTRO BOY, KIMBA THE WHITE LION and a host of other popular shows. The main benefit of membership is the bi-monthly TEZUKA FAN MAGAZINE. Interested readers should contact the fan club's American agent. Send an SASE to Stephen Waelder, P.O. Box 565, Somerville, NJ 08876 for further info not only about the fan club, but about the Tezuka-related merchandise Stephen also has for sale.

TOKYO DISNEY LAND. In the spring of 1983, there will be another Magic Kingdom, TOKYO DISNEYLAND, which will be located just outside of Tokyo, Japan. The new park will have just five lands: World Bazaar (a sort of Main Street), Adventureland, Fantasyland, Tomorrowland, and Westernland. The avenue down the center of World Bazaar will be completely glass-covered and although the architecture will be turn-of-the-century American, the shop's merchandise will come from around the world. There will also be two new only-in Tokyo attractions: Japan 200, a travel film on an immense scale, and a show called Meet the World, which describes the blossoming of Japan's relationship with the West. (The Mickey Mouse Revue, where an audio-animatronic Mickey led other Disney characters in a band was taken out of Disneyworld and shipped to Japan for inclusion in the new park.)

DISNEY CHANNEL CHANGES. April 11, 1983 was supposed to be the launch date for a new eighteen-hour-a-day cable TV network. The Disney Channel was supposed to be a joint operation between Disney and Group W, who owns the satellite channels necessary for such a project. In September, both groups announced that the deal had collapsed and that Disney would take over sole operation of the channel with Group W perhaps selling the satellite channels to Disney for about $26 million. The major disagreement seemed to be the program emphasis. Disney wanted the channel to spotlight their new EPCOT project, while Group W wanted more reruns of Disney's commercial TV programs.

SPEED BUGGY RETURNS. Things happen quickly in Saturday morning television. CBS and Hanna-Barbera originally planned to do a show entitled THE DUKES, which was to be based on the popular DUKES OF HAZZARD TV show. Unfortunately, when Wopat and Schneider walked out on the prime-time show over a financial dispute, it also stopped the preliminary work on the animated series that was to have used the actors' voices (and likenesses) for the characters of Bo and Luke. Supposedly, the series is still planned, but what form it will now take is undecided.

FOR THOSE WHO MISSED IT. The year's winner of the Emmy Award for Outstanding Animated Television Program was ABC's THE GRINCH GRINCHES THE CAT IN THE HAT, directed by Friz Freleng.

THE MARVEL AGE OF ANIMATION. No further news on that syndicated animated SPIDER-MAN series that has been completed for over a year. Original plans were to use it to supplement the Grantray-Lawrence episodes still in syndication. Stan Lee is doing narrating on some of the new episodes of the HULK/SPIDER-MAN HOUR, and did you know that Russ Heath did most of the character designs/model sheets for the HULK episodes? Many thanks to Comic Reader Larry Houston, who hosted me over at his apartment one rainy afternoon this summer. We had some long discussions about animation and he supplied me with some information for a Spider-Man in Animation article to appear in COMICS FEATURE. (It's a lot different from my Fantasco article on a similar subject.) It is interesting how many animation artists are also comic-book collectors and how many of them also read TCR.

WARNER BROTHERS CARTOONS. Even though Jerry Beck and Will Friedwald sent in a ton of corrections to Scarecrow Press for a revised edition of their popular WARNER BROS. CARTOONS book, Scarecrow Press ignored them and reprinted the original edition to cover the orders that have been flooding in. It's cheaper that way; Scarecrow doesn't have to make new plates. Many thanks to Jerry Beck for inviting me to M-G-M once again, to view some long-unseen M-G-M cartoons like the Captain and the Kids and Hanna-Barbera's GOODWILL TO MEN. By the way, Joe Dante will be directing the TWILIGHT ZONE segment for which Jerry is an advisor. [The film recently resumed production.]

WATCH OUT! The infamous Jeff Lenburg has another animation book ready for distribution. Entitled THE GREAT CARTOON DIRECTORS, it is hoped that Mr. Lenburg did some more checking of his manuscript than on his last animation book. Animator Mark Kausler has sent Lenburg copies of every correction of Lenburg's book that has appeared in the fan press. There is a rumor that there may be a paperback edition of THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ANIMATED CARTOONS.

DID YOU KNOW? Animators went on strike because animation is being sent overseas, but do they know which well-known Southern California animation company is sending their cels to

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a prison in Baja California (that's Mexico, folks). The warden picks up a couple of extra bucks by supervising the prisoners, who do the ink and paint work on the cels for a fraction of what it would cost normally. I thought those guys were only supposed to work on license plates.

CEL PROBLEMS. If you need to have your cel repaired (chipping paint, etc.) or have the authenticity verified, then send an SASE to: Ron Stark, Search and Rescue Project, ASIFA Hollywood, 1258 North Highland Avenue, Suite 102, Hollywood, CA 90038.

NEW BOOKS. Prolific English author Denis Gifford is apparently working on a book about silent animation. Joe Adamson has just about completed his book on Walter Lantz, although, reportedly, Lantz is upset by some of Adamson's research, which might shed some new light on some old myths. Harvey Deneroff is writing a book on the history of animation unions (that's a lot more exciting than it sounds). Jerry Beck and Will Friedwald are still at work on their new book for Scarecrow, the M-G-M CARTOONS.

Please continue to send all animation news, clippings, rumors and comments to Jim Korkis, 707 West Doran, Glendale, CA 91203.

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Licensing

By Ron Massengill

NEW THIS MONTH: From Amurol Product Co. comes FANTASTIC FOUR BUBBLE GUM. It comes in a foil pouch with over one-hundred little pieces in four flavors--strawberry, orange, grape and watermelon.

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Be on the lookout for some school stickers being distributed by Spindex Corp. There are three different packages. #1121 is Award Stickers, consisting of nine stickers per sheet featuring six DC heroes. #1122 is Name Stickers, consisting of six stickers per sheet featuring three Marvel heroes. And #1123 is Reinforcements, consisting of 28 reinforcers and four DC hero stickers per sheet. There are five sheets per package.

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For all nibblers, Nabisco has SUPER-HERO COOKIES featuring DC heroes. There are in 2 1/4 ounce boxes and feature one of ten DC heroes or villains on the back panel.

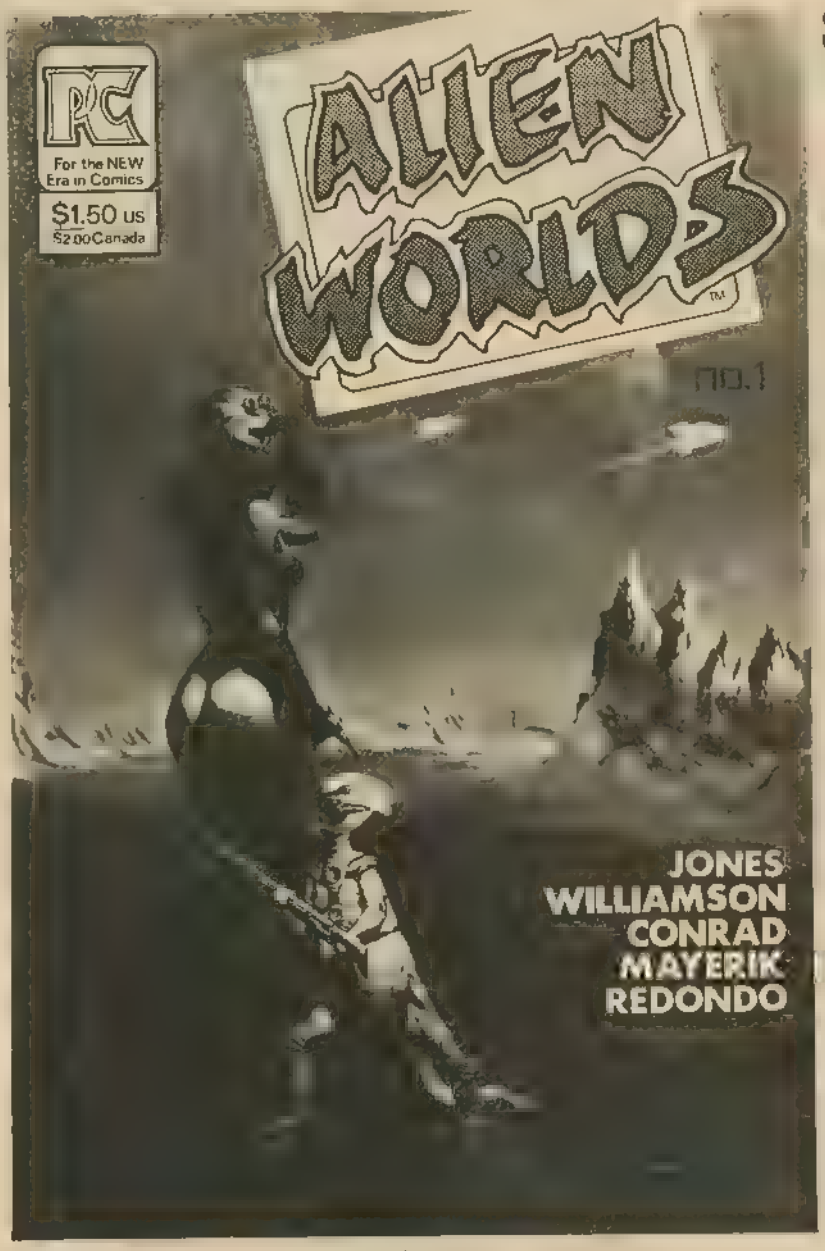
Tim Jim Products of Mineral Wells, Texas is producing THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN SWING 'N' WEB. I want to thank Kerry Gammill for the info and the accompanying drawings--one of which ended up as the front cover of this very issue!

A Comic Reader

By Sam Kujava

MARVEL MACHINATIONS--
The big news still on everyone's lips came with the departure of writer Doug Moench from Marvel. Does Managing Editor Jim Shooter REALLY plan to kill/retire/alter many of the main Marvel super-heroes in the coming months and years? Frantic fans point to the offerings of Phoenix and Elektra as beginnings of this trend. Cynical observers refer to sales figures that prove that comic books dealing with the death of major characters are enormously popular with buyers. DEATH sells.

That's not strictly true. Books like X-MEN #137 and DAREDEVIL #181 were runaway best-sellers because of their undeniable quality and dynamic commitment by the pros involved to give the very best to their fans. The fact that death occured therein is secondary. Let us judge comics by their merits, not by the gimmicks employed to boost sales. Don't fall into the Overstreet PRICE



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GUIDE trap of referring to specific issues for their perverse signposts, be it bondage or drugs or death. What attracted me to comic books from an early age was the representation of mankind at its idealistic best. That will never go out of style. In a large sense, it is that idealism, brought to fruition in World War II, that makes comics so special and unique.

I don't doubt that Shooter has given his ideas serious thought. He'd like to shake things up more with his twenty-year-old characters. Truth to tell, CAPTAIN AMERICA has been in a rut since Stern and Byrne left that book. IRON MAN took a jet-propelled nosedive when David Michelinie and Bob Layton sought greener pastures. THOR has been dead for years, strangled by Conway and brought to life briefly by Roy Thomas.

Don't mistake death for "realism." Expect fans to be wary of YET ANOTHER overblown comic featuring the death of another biggie. Fans can be manipulated, but only so far. I'm sure that Jim Shooter has these thoughts on his mind, also. Don't expect him to speak up too quickly on this touchy subject. He's reading the fanzine columns, weighing the influx of mail that's piling up on his desk and listening to the heartfelt opinions of convention-goers. As editor Mike Tiefenbacher surmised, this is a trial balloon sent up by a wily, cautious Marvel editor-in-chief. And with the hue and cry of an angry fandom growing in fury each day, it seems that the trial balloon will not survive the stormy weather.

AMETHYST, PRINCESS OF THE GEMWORLD (Preview in LEGION #297)--You have to give DC credit. The title is long and a tongue-twister at that. If you can get past the hard-to-pronounce name, there is a treat in store. AMETHYST is one of the best new things to come out of DC since ARAK and ALL-STAR SQUADRON. If one was to compare it to another new fantasy comic, ARION (lotta "A" titles, eh?) Dan Mishkin and Gary Cohn's AMETHYST reads nicely, with comprehensible dialogue, a plot that lightens up with fast-moving action and adventure instead of wallowing in ponderously grim teeth-gnashing, and very stylized and BEAUTIFUL artwork by Ernie Colon that really contributes to the reader's belief that the Gemworld is a strange, alien place, indeed. The surprising denouement was entirely unexpected to this reader, and had the desired effect of making me look forward to the further breakneck exploits of Princess "Amy." If I haven't told you much about the plot and characters, it is only because I want each reader to discover and enjoy this strip as freshly as I did. Have fun!

GRANCH, THIS IS SO BEAUTIFUL! THERE'S NOTHING LIKE IT WHERE I COME FROM!
BUT CITRINA MADE IT SOUND AS THOUGH SHE WAS SENDING US SOMEPLACE HORRIBLE DIDN'T SHE CALL IT...
THE BOG OF ONE THOUSAND DESPAIRS, PRINCESS... AND YOU MAY BE CERTAIN IT LIVES UP TO THE NAME!
MORE THAN STEPS, I'M AFRAID!
BUT IT'S ONLY STEPS AWAY FROM SUCH BEAUTY!
THE FOREST IT'S GONE!
SUCH... IS THE FIRST DESPAIR!
I SUPPOSE I'D BETTER CHANGE INTO SOMETHING MORE SUITED TO THIS PLACE!
CAREFUL, PRINCESS! REMEMBER CITRINA SAID TO SAVE YOUR MAGIC FOR THE DANGERS AHEAD!
THERE THEY ARE, MY LORD...

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THE MENTION OF MOENCH--The only thing better than hearing that long-time Marvel writer Doug Moench has gone over to DC is the news that he will be writing all of the BATMAN titles! If ever there was a character in need of a fresh approach by "new blood," the Caped Crusader is it! And the timing couldn't be better. It had also been announced that Batman was to take another "Robin" under his wing. This serves to free Dick Grayson to do some heavy growing up in THE NEW TEEN TITANS. He didn't really fit in as Bruce Wayne's young ward anymore. But another orphaned youngster entering into the millionaire's life at this time will, if handled well, draw BATMAN and faithful readers back to the great RAISON D'ETRE roots. When they dwelled on the horrible accident that was to bring about the genesis of young Wayne into vengeful creature of the night, it was an idea that was good while it lasted. But it lasted for over a decade. Conway and Wolfman and others dragged it into the dirt. Truly, BATMAN went

from a good character to a GREAT superhero when he befriended his Robin. Wayne could see for the first time his personal tragedy reflected in another's eyes, and realized that there was more purpose to his life than the eradication of "scum" and "slime." To befriend and teach and care for the fallen Robins of society is what brings out the best in BATMAN. And if new writer Moench can make any use out of what I've offered, all the better!

DAREDEVIL #190--First impressions only, since I just received and devoured this issue...Klaus Janson does his best all-around art job ever. And the coloring is phenomenal! Marvel doesn't have to give up those cheap pulp-paper comics for EPIC slickery when you can achieve results like Janson has. The last page portends good things ahead for Elektra, I hope. I prefer the hardboiled street style of Miller's earlier stuff to this confusing, symbolic mystical gobbledygook with ninjas and zombie monkeyshines, but when it is done this well, I can't protest too loudly. As for the writing, Frank is going out with a BANG. The writers' musical chairs announced in the press for the next few issues don't bode well for this comic. Alan Brennert sounds like the best of all possible choices to me. As long as Klaus hangs in there, though, DAREDEVIL will continue to be the most visually exciting comic book around.

FLASH #318--The title star is LOOKIN' GOOD, as more and more readers have been happily discovering these past few months, but the latest good word is that the back-up spot is alive and well! Carl Gafford and Dave Gibbons bring us THE CREEPER, not some pale Ditko copy, which no one could do, but their own conception, which is fine on its own! It'll take a few more viewings to see how Jack Ryder works out, but this is a far better book than it was in the days of the unreadable, garish DR. FATE.

THE JUSTICE MACHINE #4 (Noble Publications, $2.25)--If you read every Marvel comic that comes out and can't get your fill of meaningful characterization, soap-opera plotting and dialogue, and garish, awkward action figures cavorting from panel to panel, then JUSTICE MACHINE is for you! I was going to call it second-rate Marvel, but in all honesty, it's a step above THE DEFENDERS, which Mike Gustovich has also inked in recent months.

FANDOM CONFIDENTIAL Starring Jim Engel and Chuck Fiala (Kitchen Sink, $2.95)--If I LOOKED exactly like a cartoon character, maybe I'd be this funny too! This slick mag is a collection of Jim and Chuck's Photo Phunny Page, for all of you who came in late. Funny, boffo yuks for fans in the know and pros who want to be fans again, FC's barbs are somehow just as humorous now as when they were timely. The brand-new seven-page feature with guest John Byrne shows that seeming fame hasn't spoiled these guys yet...they're just as corny and awful and lovable as ever. The work of these two, as well as the writing and art of Keno Don Rosa and the late great Alan Jim Hanely, gives ample evidence that some of the best cartoonists in the WORLD have labored in relative obscurity. One of the best aspects of being a card-carrying member of much-maligned fandom is my introduction to the work of such talented people.

ACR READS--SUPERBOY #37--If this is a sample of Paul Kupperberg's approach to the Teen of Steel, then this mag is in capable hands! We've got a well laid-out mystery of sorts, good interaction among the supporting players, and NOT A BIT of it is overdone. For a young writer to show such restraint is astonishing and admirable. Kurt Schaffenberger's work looks great when he's allowed to ink his own pencils. On the DIAL "H" FOR HERO back-up, Howard Bender better take it easy on the Buscema swipes. They're getting pretty obvious.

FANTASTIC FOUR #249--Sure, John Byrne has a ways to go as a writer and artist. So much happens to the characters so quickly. The backgrounds are sparse, overall. Every woman is drawn just about the same. I can go on. But I look forward to this title each month with eager anticipation. I know that because Byrne is giving his all to this title, as he did with X-MEN, I am going to be assured of great entertainment. That counts for a lot, to A Comic Reader.

BLACKHAWK #254--I can almost forgive Mighty Marv Wolfman for all his various transgressions, because he was largely responsible for bringing this title back to life. It has never been MORE lively, with the writing of Mark

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Evanier and the art of Dan Spiegle. Dave Cockrum is on hand too, with a back-up feature to compliment his usual cover. The character development is simply spectacular! As a reader, it is satisfying to be made aware of some delectable nuance of personality through an intriguing line or a subtle facial expression. It is obvious that the pros involved have some respect for their audience. There ARE some superfluous captions in the lead story that tell me what I already see. They strike me as editorial meddling. I hope this is not a trend, because BLACKHAWK is otherwise just about the most enjoyable read there is.

G.I. COMBAT #252--Before BLACKHAWK came along, this was the BEST war comic on the stands. If I restrict my vote to khaki capers, then COMBAT is still on top. When Murray Boltinoff used to edit a batch of DC comics, they were all big sellers. When he left those titles, they withered and died under lesser hands. Now Murray is down to editing this one book, probably more as a favor than anything. Some favor... G.I. COMBAT is one of DC's consistent best-sellers, it is the one $1.00-size comic that hasn't shrunk with the rest, and it is the production department's dream, always ahead of schedule and just bursting with nice material. Just when you think that you've grown tired of the Haunted Tank and Ninja and the Mercenaries, writer Robert Kanigher and editor Boltinoff toss a live hand grenade into your preconceptions.

SGT. ROCK #375--This book has been weak in the art area for a long time. Writer RK would love to have a rough and tumble vet like Joe Kubert on the lead feature, but it's a cinch that Kubert is all but out of mainstream comics, except for the chore of editing this book and lucrative cover assignments. Frank Redondo was always capable, but his inking line seemed too soft and clean for a war feature. Word is that Kubie School grad Jack Arata has signed on to work under his mentor's watchful gaze, but even that stint is finite. Methinks RK would relish a steady creative partner in his lonely foxhole. The back-ups are forgettable. The art is one step up from school assignments, and I oughta know. I was there.

TEAM AMERICA #8 and counting --9*10*11*12...another addition to the Shooter Scrap Head, along with SHOGUN WARRIORS, SAVAGE SHE-HULK, STAR TREK and GODZILLA. Truthfully, I am interested in finding out just WHO the Marauder is, but it seems such an expensive waste of paper and ink to dangle one decent plotline. Maybe he could just tell us the secret in a future Bullpen Bulletins page. Any of you speculators out there who like DEATH? Stay tuned...in TEAM AMERICA you're gonna get it wholesale.

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